STUDIES IN
THE MAHABHARATA

EDITOR:
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Introduction

The *Mahabharata* next to the *Ramayana* is undoubtedly a unique creation which explores the total vision of the mankind. It would not be improper to assert it as a world document of human civilisation. It is not merely a religious or a philosophical treatise or a grand manual of war for it has ached the master minds of anthropologists, historians, astronomers, linguists and scholars in the fields of poetics and aesthetics. The common Oriya saying that YAHA NAHIN BHARATE TAHA NAHI BHARATE, which means " which is not described in the *Mahabharata* is not found in the whole of India" is definitely very apt.

Every Indian even at his highest station of life is proud of enjoying inspirations from this great work and those valued inspirations do very often shape his style of functioning and do mould his most pragmatic thinking.

We are proud of our National Poet, Sudra Muni Sarala Das who composed the *Mahabharata* in vernacular Oriya in the early part of the 15th Century in the light of the great classic. It is not a translated work of the original *Mahabharata* as it stands out in its uniqueness of the author's own creative impulse and imaginative experience. His *Mahabharata* is veritably the cultural history of Orissa of the mediaval times and is probably the earliest work in vernacular in the Northern India. To his credit Sarala Das has also composed the *Ramayana*, *Chandipurana* and *Vilanka Ramayana* and an incomplete translation of the *Bhagavat* during his life time.

Any discussion on the *Mahabharata* in Orissa will remain inadequate if this great author and his work are not referred to in right perspective. Sarala Das has given a panoramic view of epic personages steeped in the soil of Orissa with all their human frailities and oddities. In his monumental work he has shown a mind uniguely inventive. He has been extremely faithful to all his characters and has maintained objective detachment throughout. The whole topography of Orissa including the complex fabric Orissan life on the historic monuments and shrines have received a loving treatment in the hand of Sarala. What surprises us is his ingenious skill and craftmanship. I hope, some of the learned articles included in this book will partly throw some light on Sarala's magnum opus.

This book is the product of our esteemed participants who presented their valued papers at the two-day National Seminar on the *Mahabharata* organised by our Institute during June, 1988. I express my deep gratitude to them and wish that the book will find many a loving reader like our earlier publications.

K. C. Mishra
Director

IN QUEST OF PEACE

S. Nath

The Mahabharata and the Gita are not only of current interest but also of perennial value through the ages, Though they originated in the East, strenghening the vitality and vigour of the Prachya Darshana in the Indian language and style of presentation, they were along with the Vedas and the Vedanta, non-sectarian and had a social, cultural and spiritual thrust for the entire mankind. We must highlight in this context, the universality of their appeal and application and their emphasis on integration between thought, speech and action *Kayena manasa vaca* beyond the bounds of time, place and the individual. Today, we are exposed to a crisis as a world phenomenon in general and in the Indian scenerio in particular.

Why is it so with us today ? There has been phenomenal expansion, just to cite one aspect only, of literacy and formal schooling in our country since independence. But the linguistic ability and the content have, by and large, not been deep, fluent, free and desirably correct. If the content is smathering, the linguistic ability has been flattening. The determined effort of Ekalavya and the singular devotion of the Pandavas are a few instances worthy of mention. In such a situation, the access of the current generation of the students to the Sanskrit text of the Mahabharata and even their translation to the modern Indian languages is much limited. "There are very few youngsters who are familiar enough with Sanskrit to read through the book in original." Again the Bhagavata Ghara, Harihata, Sapta etc. as traditional agencies of non-formal

education, instead of spreading to the cities which have emerged in large numbers with increasing density of population in each, have remained decadent even in their original village life wherein they flourished at the individual, social and national level with a thrust for the Mahabharatiya life—"What is not there is no where to be found," claimed to be valid by generations of Indian authors. That apart, the modalities of expression. the most familiar of which being the Paranayana, Pala, Puja etc. are getting out of style under the pressure of the melodies and mundane activities, most inconvenient to accommodate the great epics.

As an alternative to this & in view of our fondness for English, we sometimes refer to the translation of the Mahabharata in English. They are generally literal and are "like the wrong side of a tapestry, the threads are all there but the pattern is missing." Further, translator's English is not suited to the elaborate similes common to Sanskrit. To illustrate this point, let me quote two instances from Kamala Suvramaniam, She Says, in Sankrit Arjuna is called "Bharatarshabha". It is pleasing to the ear. But in English, it is "Oh, Bull of the Bharata Race". How awkward it sounds ! Again, a woman, addressed as "Madagajagamani" in Sanskrit becomes "Oh, woman with the gait of an elephant in rut." The sound is ridiculous. Description of Indian concepts of beauty, aesthetics and other cultural qualities are indeed hard to convecy in English. Under these constraints, our minds and particularly the minds of the younger generation are stuffed with dead bones of merely names, inert ideas etc. *Namaivatat* was the reply of Sanat Kumar in *Chandogya Upanisad* to a young book-worm, most unhappy Narada by name who was advised to be *Atmavit* (in stead of being *Mantravit*) so that he can enjoy *Nityasanti*. Referring to the "Romance" that is the Mahabharata and the moral and spiritual heights, it is said,

"He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul, he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life." In fine, the author himself says in *Adiparvan* that the Mahabharata is indeed heavy:

Mahatvad bharavattvac Mahabharatamucyate
Niruktamasya yoveda sarvapapaih pramucyate

But unlimited is our unhappiness ! As a matter of fact, we are not in peace both within and without, Tension is mounting at the level of the individual from the family to the country and the world, Security conducive to growth and expansion is threatened due to violence, extremism, excessive physical force, highjacking etc at the national and international levels. Non-practice of truth, nonviolenc, love and spiritual excellence with lack of collective concern for humanity has led to disharmony and discontentment. The Mahabharata has rightly put emphasis on contentment as the best reward.

Nityo dharmah sukha duhkhatva nitye
nityo jivo dhaturasasya nityah |
tyaktva nityam pratitisthasva nitye
santusyatvam tosaparohi bhavya ||

Dharma is eternal, but anitya is pleasure and pain, jiva *nitya*, but body is *anitya*. Therefore, Oh, Dhritarastra, be not (too much) attached to *anitya* and have faith in *Nitya* and thus be contented. There is, therefore, no greater reward than contentment.

Again *Santosh vai svargatamah santosah paramam sukham |*
Tuste na kincit paratah susamyak paritisthati ||

Contentment is the greatest of all prosperity. It is better than heavenly bliss. By this, one gets the highest bliss. If there is no contentment in mind, no special position (prestige) can give real happiness.

It is indeed a paradox in the spiritual domain, more so in the material, that despite the rich spiritual heritage and tradition, we are impoverished today. Our practices are not correlated with the promises. We do not stubborn and strong behind the basic tenet of the conquest of truth over falsehood (*Satyameva jayate*) *Ahimsasa* over himsa (*Ahimsa paramo dharmah*) *Nyaya* over *Anyaya*, spiritual force over physical prowess etc. which are exemplified in the Mahabharata and such other texts. India's common cultural heritage drawn from the master pieces of art and literature and religious trends is the sustaining, nourishing, unifying and strengthening material. Against the backdrop of the saying, if woalth is lost, nething is lost, if health is lost, something is lost and if character is lost, everything is lost, we are experiencing a reversal of the value system, i.e, if character is lost, nothing is lost, if health is lost, something is lost and if wealth is lost, everything is lost. The Mahabharatiya Sukti is a categorical reminder of the importance of character.

Tasyam samsadi sarvasyam ksattaram pujayamyaham |
Vrtten hi bhavatyaryo na dhanena na vidyaya ||

Kunti speaks to Shrikrishna, "Oh, Krishna, I pay more respect to Vidur, of all members of the Kuru Sabha, because he alone clearly opposed the discourtesy shown to Draupadi. A person is great by his own noble character and good conduct (*sadacara*) and not by his wealth (*dhana*) or learning (*vidya*). Further in another Sukti, it is poined out that

Na kulam vrttchinasya pramanm iti me matih |
antyesvapi hi jatanam vrttameva visisyate ||

Vidur opines that a characterless person, even if he hails from a high family is not the best. Rather if a person is a man of good character, even in case he is born in a low family, he is to be respected.

Also with regard to Dharma, the Mahabharata holds a non-secterian and cosmopolitan stand *"Dharanat dharma ityahu dharmena vidhrtah prajah*. The capacity to retain, hold and sustain mankind is Dharma. Such is the character-manking for the man and the mankind to make possible the guest for peace.

Last of all, *Sarvasastra puranesu vyasasya vacanam dvayam |*
Paropakarah punyaya papaya parapidanam ||



MAHABHARATA AND INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

B. Banarjee

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are the two great literary creations of India which have moulded the life, thought and activities of Indians for centuries. We can hardly name any other works in the entire literary world which has exerted so much influence on a nation as has been done by these two works While the Ramayana is a fairly unified poem and is generally accepted as a popular epic the Mahabharata, in its present form, can scarcely be considered as such. The Mahabharata is not at all a single or unified poetic creation, it is a whole literature. The principal narrative of the Mahabharata augmented by numerous myths, legends, moral and philosphical teachings etc. has come down to us as a valuable source book and authority on law, morality and philosophy. It teaches the three aims of life, *dharma, artha, kama,* along with the wisdom leading to salvation. The Mahabharata declares itself to be a sacred manual of morality, the best code for practical life, and a *sastra* of liberation.

dharmasastramidam punyam arthasastramidam param /
moksasastram idam proktam Vyasenamitabudhina (1.57.23)

The all-pervasive knowlege inculcated in the work has imparted a rare sanctity and authority to the Mahabharata which has been said to be a compendium of all sacred knowledge (*sarvasastrasamuha*) I. 57.35. It has been claimed that whatever relating to the knowledge of *dharma, artha, kama* and *moksa* are found in the Mahabharata can be traced elsewhere, but what has not been taught in the Mahabharata can not exist anywhere.

dharme carthe ca kame ca mokse ca bharatarsabha /
yad ihasti tad anyatra yan nehasti na kutracit. I. 57.24

There is a popular saying in Bengali conforming to the same claim :

ja nai Bharate ta nai Bharate,—what we do not get in the Mahabharata does not exist in India.

With such characteristics as a literary creation the Mahabharata is indeed expected to contain discussion on metaphysics, to provide instructions upon philosophy, to promote guidance to the path of salvation, etc. among other things. A repertory of ancient Indian ballad poems the Mahabharata is also very much a repository of the essence of Indian philossphy. The Mahabharata, however, does not preach any particular system of philosophy nor does it advocate or establish a separate system of its own. Since the Mahabharata grew to its present form and character through the ages the ideas, beliefs, thoughts or speculations current at a particular time could creep into the text and an enormous mass of most varied or diverse type of matters gathered round the nucleus. Its popularity prompted the contending sects or groups to use it 'as the very medium for the propagation of their own doctrines, and thereby for the strengthening and consolidation of their influence.' Winternitz, HIL, I. 319.

The ancient Indian religious groups or sects of ascetics of those days did not differ so distinctly from one another in their line of metaphysical, spiritual or ethical thinking and consequently in the edifying parables, stories or maxims embodied in the Mahabharata are to be traced ideas and thoughts which are both in accord with the Upanisads and in conformity with the sacred texts of the Buddhists and Jainas. There is a good number of places or passages in the epic where the ideas expressed in the Mahabharata find fully reflected, sometimes as if translated,

in Buddhist texts. It may be mentioned in this connection that the famous dialogue between the father and the son Medhavin in the Santiparvan or even any verse from it could just as well be fitted in a Buddhist or a Jaina text. A portion of the dialogue may be actually found to occur in the Uttaradhyayana-sutra (14.21-23) of the Jainas while another portion literally corresponds with some verses of the Buddhist text Dhammapada. The view of life as represented by Medhavin in the said dialogue confroms to the views expressed by the Buddists and the Jainas. This view, however, should not be considered as belonging to them only and it will not be a correct approach to consider the dialogue or even a part of it as Buddhist or as borrowed from the Buddhists. The dialogue moves entirely in the Buddhistic trend leading us to the *atman*-theory as explained in the Upanisads. This remarkable characteristics of the philosophy of the Mahabharata prompted Hopkins to designate it as Epic philosophy without assigning it to any particular school, sect or time. Deussen, the famous German exponent of Indian philosophy, finds in the philosophy of the Mahabharata a sort of transition philosophy, a transition 'between the philosopy of the Upanisads and that of the later times'. We should not, however, forget in this connection that the epic proper has nothing to do with philosophy and it is only in the portions gathering round the nucleus at different periods of time that we come across real philosophical doctrines 'belonging to widely different times.

Though philosophical ideas, doctrines, metaphysical discussions etc. are to be found in most of the extensive didactic sections of the Mahabharata the Santiparvan (Book XIII), particularly the section on the *moksa-dharma*, is in a way a real mannual of philosophy and has been considered as of inestimable value us a source book for Indian philosophy. Besides the Santiparvan we get

important instructions on such topics in the Vanapravan (Book III), in the Udyogaparvan (Book V), in the Anusasanaparvan (Book XIII) which is again essentially a manual of *Dharmasastra*, and above all, in the Bhismaparvan (Book VI) wherein occurs the great *Srimad-bhagavad-Gita*. In fact four valuable philosophical texts, viz. the Narayaniya section (Book XII), the Sanatsujatiya section (Book V), the Gita (Book VI) and the Anugita (Book XIV), are included in the Mahabharata.

It my be assumed that the philosophical systems as such by their respective names were not known to the epic poets since we do not find the names of the systems occurring here. The word *vedanta* occurs several times but it is thought that the term does not refer to the particular system of philosophy but almost everywhere means Upanisads or Aranyakas. In the Gita the expression *Vedantakrd vedavid eva ca ham* perhaps refers to the Aranyakas whereas the expression *vedantavabhrtaplutah* in the address of Karna to Arjuna in the Karnaparvan seems to have referred to a virtuous man thoroughly acquainted with the holy scriptures As the name of a system Mimamsa is not traceable in the Mahabharata and though Nyaya might have been known it is doubtful if the system as such has been recognised in the Mahabharata excepting perhaps in a few late passages.

In the Santiparvan (XIII. 350, 64ff) we are told of four *jnanani*, philosophies, the Samkhya-yoga, the Pancaratra, Vedaranyaka, Pasupata, and several seers have been nemed as the authors or these *jnanani*. Kapila is named as the author of the Samkhya philosophy and he is in fact the only seer who is known to the epic as the founder of system. Sandilya is respectfully mentioned but not as the founder of a system but as a seer recommending yoga-meditation. (XII 254, 14) Names of Badarayana and

Patanjali are not known whereas Gautama and Jaimini are only sages. The reference to Kanada is available first in the Harivamsa. Kapila is said to have received his wisdom from Siva and his treatise is repeatedly declared to be the oldest. In the Mahabharata we come across numerous passages or sayings conveying solemn thoughts on various topics which are but common to all philosophy or religio-philosophical groups. The Mahabharata is a storehouse of such utterances.

The inevitability of death has been pointed out several times as that death is sure to overtake one who is born and a re-birth of the man dead is certain : jatasya hi dhruvo mrtyur dhruvam janma mrtasya ca. VI. 26, 27. etc. The *Jiva* has been said to be *sanatan* while the *sarira* is *adhruva* III. 170,23. The body is sure to perish and when it perishes the *jiva* passes into another since we are bound by our karman.

badhyamane sarire tu dehanaso bhavatyuta
jivah samkramate nyatra karmabandhanivandhanah.

III. 170,24

The theory of karman which is perhaps first explained in the Upanisads and which has been in some form or other a moot point of discussion in almost all schools of Indian philosophy is interpreted several times in the Mahabharata and forms the subject-matter of many profound narratives. We find a very interesting account in the Anusasanaparvan (Book XIII) in which a hunter whose son has died of snake-bite Death, Fate and the snake participate. It is said that as light and its shade are most closely connected with each other so are connected the doer and his deeds through everything done by the doer himself :

yatha chayatapau nityam susambaddhau nirantaram
tatha karma ca karta ca sambaddhavatmakarmabhih.

XIII. 1, 68

Our karman is the guiding factor of our future, *sarve karmavasa vayam*, and our fate is shaped by our own karman. Just as a potter shapes out of a lump of clay everything that he desires to make, so also a man is destined to attain that fate only which he has prepared for himself by his own actions. The hunter is told that the death of his son has been due to his own actions, *vinasahetuh karmasya*, and nobody else is responsible for the death of the hunter's son :

yatha mrtpindatah karta kurute yad yad icchati
evam atma krtam karma manavah pratipadyate XIII, 1.67.

The insatiable nature of craving and the danger of getting away by the attachments to worldly objects have been pointed out again and again. We are warned that our desires can never be removed by the gratification of senses rather it increases more and more like the fire kindled with *havis* : na jatu kamah kamanam upabhogena samyati
havisa krsnavartmeva bhuya evabhivardhate I. 75,50

Whatever crops, wealth, animals, women there are in this world, the desires of a single man would not be satiated if he were to enjoy them all. I. 73, 13. With the help of a parable Vidura in the Striparvan explains the transitory nature of the world and worldly existence. The futility of attachments and the vain nature of the objects of senses have been the subject of discussion at many places in Mahabharata. The episode of Pingala in the Santiparvan shows us the height of happiness that one can reach with the removal of attachment to senses. Contentment, peace of mind and happiness resulting therefrom are extolled as the best of attainments. Happiness is won by the person who has been able to free himself from the bonds of desires : *trsnam tyajatah sukham*. I. 73,14. What is necessary to get release from the bonds of attachment is to set the mind in a state of perfect balance. The experience of Janaka after he has attained perfect peace of mind is a pointer to

that direction. Janaka is represented in the Santiparvan as exclaiming - Immeasurable is my wealth (since). I have no possession, nothing of mine burns while Mithla is burning.

anantam vata me vittamyasya nasti me kincana
mithilayam pradiptayam na me dahyati kincana. 17, 19

This ecstatic utterance of Janaka may be compared with the sentiment or experience underlying the dialogue between the cowherd Dhaniya and the Buddha in ecstasy, in the Sutta-nipata. Purification of mind and its perfect stability have been declared to be the essential and the highest attainments for a man striving for peace of mind and happiness. The attitude of forbearance to living beings, i. e., *ahimsa* has been stated to be the highest virtue and it is based on truth. *ahimsa paramo dharmah sa ca satye pratisthitah*. If one were to reveal the essence of *dharma* in one word he could do it with the expression *ahimsa*. Total extinction of the feeling of *himsa* in the mind is a type of *yoga*. The Mahabharata, however, does not find anything wrong in committing lawful *himsa*, such as the performance of the sacrifices according to the *sastra* or the killing necessary for one's existence. *Himsa* in self-defence is prescribed and its contrary is condemned as a sin, Anything which causes harm to others is considered as *himsa* and so *himsa* can be caused in four ways-it can be physical, it can be mental, it can be verbal and it may also be caused by one's taking the food. One who is able to keep himself away from all these four types of *himsa* is a true practiser of *ahimsa*. The practice of *ahimsa* leads a man to eternal glory and happiness, The Mahabharata finds more sorrows in this life than happiness : sukhad bahutaram duhkham jivitenatra samsayah. XII. 331, 16. The practice of penance (*tapasya*) has been told to be the highest force in quieting the mind. There is nothing unattainable in this world by *tapasya* : tapaso hi param nasti tapasa vindate mahat. II. 91, 19. The

Mahabharata places the *Man* above everything else and says that a man should be judged by his actions only. The secret truth, the epic says, is that nothing is greater or higher than the *Man* and the practice of a penance to become a true and perfect man is the best form of *tapasya* : na manusac chreyataram hi kincit. What counts in the Mahabharata is the inner worth, the nobility of soul, and not the external paraphernalia like the coloured robe or matted hair etc. Not birth but a virtuous life can make one a *Brahmana*.

Besides these general or universal observations of philosophy the Mahabharata contains special references to the *anviksiki* as a *vidya* or knowledge of logic as helpful to the attainment of salvation. Disputations according to the *sastra* have been encouraged. The *nyaya* and *vaisesika* methods have been accepted at places but the names of the systems do not appear at any place. Yajnavalkya is said to have established the existence of Isvara in the Santiparvan with the help of logic and *sruti* and the arguments are mentioned as belonging to the *anviksiki - vidya*, but in fact the arguments are in conformity with the *sruti*. *Pratyahya. anumana, upamana,* and *sabda* are the four *pramana*-s and it is enjoined that where *pratyaksa* fails the *anumana* has to be resorted to know the object : pratyksena paroksam tad anumanena sidhyati. XIII. 194. 50 Of the five *mahabhutas* the *nityatva* of space (*akasa*) is not recognised and the eleven *indriyas*, viz., the five *karmendriyas*, the five *jnanendriyas* and *manas* are known. The seven categories of the *vaisestkas* do not find any place in the epic which speaks of only the five elements as the categories. The *dehin* or the *atman* has to be taken as a separate entity and all other categories are included in the five elements. *Visesa* (difference), *samavaya* (aggregate) and *abhava* (negation) are refuted as categories (*padartha*).

In the epic we get a detailed treatment of the Samkhya-yoga principles and in most of the philosophical sections of the Mahabharata the Samkhya and Yoga stand in the foreground with interpolated passages conveying Vedantic teachings. In the *Narayaniya* section, for example, we get the Bhagavata religion and the philosophy af Samkhya yoga mingled with Vedantic ideas. At a time in ancient India the philosophy of Samkhya was the most popular one and that is why perhaps the Samkhya ideas and principles were incorporated to a large extent in the Puranas, Itihasas and Tantras. The ancient saying : nasti samkhyasamam jnanam nasti yogasamam balam shows the popularity the teachings once enjoyed in India. The Bhagavatas speak of their philosophy as equal to the Samkhya-yoga : samkhyayogena tulyo hi dharma ekanta-sevitah. XII. 349. 74 Kapila, the author of Samkhya, was the most important of the seers khown to epic : siddhanam kapilo munih, and he has been identified with Agni, Visnu and Siva : agnih sa kapilo nama samkhyayogapravartakah. III. 221. 21, The name of Kapila is inseparably connected the *Samkhyasastra* but in the Mahabharata are particularly collected the teachings of Yajnavalkya,sometimes also those of Vasistha, on the subject. These are not identical with the *Kapila* in all respects.

The twenty-four *tattvas* of Samkhya have been explained at many places in the Mahabharata and we have also the *purusa,* the Unmanifest, as the 25th *tattva.* Though Unmanifest the *purusa* is reflected in the *prakriti*, the cause of creation and destruction, and as such is Manifest like an image reflected in the mirror. XII. 302.39-42. The Samkhya of the Mahabharata is not withouht the *Isvara* or the *Parama Bhahma* who is recognised as the 26th. *tattva.* The *jivatma* can not attain salvation only with the knowledge of

the 24 *tattvas,* salvation dawns upon the *purusa,* the 25th. *tattva* only after the immeasurableeternal *ParamaBrahma* ie the *Isvara,* the 26th. *tattva* is realised. In the Mahabharata we find a very interesting synthesis of the Upanisadic *Brahma-Vidya* and the Samkhya principles. The nature of *moksa* or salvation has been explained here in a unique way by uniting the *Samkhya-Vidya* with the *Brahma-Vidya* :

prakrtim capyatikramya gacchatyatmanam avyayam
narayanatmanam nir dvandvam prakrteh param.
XII. 301, 96

The concept of *mukti* as in the Mahabharata being not independent of the *Isvara* is very near to the Vedantic idea. The *Samkhya-Vidya* in the Mahabharata is brihgt with the lustre of *Isvara.* The theory of Kapila that *mukti* is derived from *jnana* is different from that of Yajnavalkya in that in the latter the surrender of the self to the *Isvara* in *bhakti* is recognised as an auxiliary cause. According to the Mahabharata the *apara prakrti* is the *Isvara* is the *pradhana* of the Samkhya and the *para prakrti* of the *purusa. Purusa* and *prakrti* are in fact transformations of the *Isvara.*

The two systems, Samkhya and Yoga have often been said to be one and the claim for this identity has been from the Yoga side which is deistic. It is said that the *sastra* is the Yoga while the *jnana* is Samkhya. The Samkhya has the *jnanayoga* while the yogins have the *Karmayoga,* the yoga lays stess on religious practices whereas the Samkhya concentrates on knowledge : Jnanayogena samkhyanam karmayogena yoginam. Traditionally the Yoga-philosophy has been explained by the *Yoga-sutra* of Patanjali which consists of four *padas.* The Katha, the Svetasvatara have also explained the excellence of the *yoga* The yoga in the Mahabharata may be divided into three *padas* by including the topics of the *samadhi-pada* in the *sadhana.* The *nididhyasana* according to the *sruti* may be considered as

the *yoga* or the means to *cittavrtti-nirodha.* In many respects the Yoga-teachings are not different from the Samkhya ideas. The *padarthas* of the Samkhya are recognised in the Yoga. Those who designate the philosopny of Kapila as atheistic call the Yoga philosophy as deistic Samkhya. According to the Mahabharata, however, the difference between the two can not be said in that way since the Samkhya here is not without the *Isvara,* The Samkhya and the Yoga are not two different *sastras,* they have been instructed with the same purpose :

> samkhyayogau prthag balah pravadanti na panditah.
> VI, 29, 4-5 ; XII. 305. 19

The *Yoga-vidya* is also not different from the Upanisad or the *Brahma-vidya* and it is for this reason that the Gita is variously called the Upanisad, the *Brahma-vidya,* the *Yoga-sastra* : yoga eva hi yoganam kim anyad yogalaksanam.
XII. 305, 25.

The union (yoga) of the *jiva* with the *Isvara* has been expressed in the Mahabharata by the term *Yoga.* VI. 30' 15

Jaimini, the author of the Mimamsa-sutra, was according to the Mahabharata a disciple of Vyasa, the author of the epic. The Mimamsa mainly deals with Vedic *Karma-Kanda* and we do not get in the Mahabharata any discussion or treatment of the *pramana* or *vidhi* of the Mimamsa. According to the Mahabharata the *jnana-kanda* and the *karma-kanda* are not two different *sastras* but are the same as the Mimamsa. Instructions on *jnana-kanda* can not be received unless the *citta* is purified by karman.

The pancaratra, the Pasupata and several non-Vedic views known as of the heretics are also to be found in the Mahabharata. The epic is an unfathomable ocean of nectar and discussion on its manifold aspects can go on for the benefit of the earnest.

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KARMA-YOGA IN *GITA* : ITS VALUATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Bijayananda Kar

Gita is said to have been universally acclaimed as comprehending the quintessence of the *Mahabharata* philosophy.[1] And *Gita* itself is said to have been propounding a philosophy of activism. A good deal of discussion has already been made with regards to the nature and status of the philosophy of activism as advocated by *Gita*. Many have remarked that *Gita* supports a philosophy of *karma* based on knowledge and devotion.[2] It is also found that prominent commentators have tried to interprete the philosophy of *Gita* from their own point of views, creating thus an impression that they have read their own meanings, quite foreign to *Gita* itself. For instance, Sankara has interpreted Sankhya as *atmanatma-viveka-jnana* and that finally culminates in *naiskarmya* which apparently is found to be incompatible with *Gita's samatva-buddhi-rupa-karma-yoga*.[3] While Sankara is found to have been emphatic on *jnana*, Ramanuja is for *karma-jnana* integration, and Chaitanya is for the emphasis on *bhakti*. All these diverse points of views need not be taken as necessarily out of the original track. These again need not be regarded as one-sided and radical. Rather these varieties of interpretations clearly reveal the rich pervasive character of *Gita* itself and how the highly enlightening point from philosophical angle that *Gita* can be viewed from so many different perspectives. Further this kind of enterprise has

definitely helped us in being acquainted with diverse philosophical possibilities which otherwise we might not have become fully aware of.

It is, of course, true that while one emphasises the basis of *jnana* in the *karma-yoga*, certain passages of *Gita* appear to be incompatible; so also when one emphasises the element of *bhakti* certain other passages remain incoherent. But this state-of-affair need not' upset the philosophical enterprise at least. Primarily because it is not itself unquestionable that *Gita* is one single treatise composed by one author at one time. So to anticipated that there must be one single philosophic outlook advocated by the whole of *Gita* is mostly unwarranted and irrelevant. What is more significant is rather to explore a point of view in *Gita* which is least rationally dissatisfactory. And it should be noted that rational consistency is the most dependable criterian for any kind of philosophising. This at least is the minimum requirement for any kind of philosophical rendering and in that way a philosophic view is discriminated from a mystical or obscurant approach. Keeping this thing in mind, I have made a modest attempt here to review the concept of *karma-yoga* in *Gita* with a specific reference to explore as well as evaluate its valuational framework.

The word : *karma* literally means action or deed. It some times points to Vedic rituals. It also signifies duties in accordancs with customs and traditions of a particular sect or class. It further means devotional acts like worship and prayer. Hiriyanna has brought out these four different meanings and has held that *karma-yoga* in *Gita* "may be rendered as 'devotion to the discharge of social obligations'."[4] Ordinarily all voluntary actions are preceded by a desire for attaining something. It may be

said as motive or result. In other words, action is bound to be motivated and thus motiveless action is just not possible. But *Gita's karma-yoga* is placed on a different footing, viz. motiveless action (*niskama karma*). There 'the act should be viewed not as a means but as an end in itself'. For *Gita* says; "your concern is solely with action never with its fruits".[5]

Of course the action performed by the *karma-yogi*, as far as it is action, must bear fruit; but he never desires it. *Gita* holds that *yoga* here signifies balance of mind (*samatvam*). The role of intellectual comprehension or rational understanding is well anticipated here. A *karm-yogi* is a *sthita-prajna* who is firmly placed on discriminative wisdom. In this context, *Gita's* emphasis that there is nothing purer than knowledge (*nahi jnanena sadrsam pavitramiha vidyate*) is worth-noting.[6] It is because of *sama buddhi* (balanced intellect), the person moves on performing desireless actions for the larger interest of human society without having any motive for personal gain.

Karma-yoga is a mean between *nivrtti* (negativity) and *pravrtti* (positivity) in so far as it neither completely discards the noble principle of moral values nor fully withdraws from the worldly empiric life of sense and aspirations. It is meant here to strike a reasonable balance between the two extreme by means of what may be called as tempering the ordinary living by the cool principle of reason and never tampering it. Renunciation is only with regard to the sense of attachment and it does not obstruct the flow of action. The desireless action or acting in a detached manner does not suggest that the person is to act in an indifferent manner. He is never to remain callous and unconcerned. He is, on the contrary,

fully conscious of his duties and responsibilities. Only he is not mindful of the result. There is, to put in another way, the reference at maximum involvement with minimum attachment. *Karma-yogi*, as remarked elswhere, is fully conscious that he is *karta* (agent), but he never bothers that he would be a *bhokta* (reaper) too. It seems, the sense of sociality is given here prominence over individuality.

But, in this regard, doubt has been cast regarding the very conceivability of pure desireless action. Will without desire is said to be a mere fiction. How can there be any action without any motive ? It seems, *Gita* has anticipated this difficulty. For, it concedes the presence of desire for a *karma-yogi* in so far as he is set for self-realisation (*atmasuddhi*) and God-realisation (*Isvaranubhuti*).[7] It is said that by way of purifying one's own self, one is conscious of his social obligations and duties towards other fellow-beings and by being drawn towards God one develops within himself a theistic or say a spiritual outlook. Even *atmasuddhi* which is interpreted as having some moral concern at the social plane, is also found to have been viewed as a sort of spiritual excellence. For that also finally leads to the realisation of one's own self or spirit. Thus the *Gita* doctrine of *karma-yoga* is viewed in terms of spiritual transcendence where the issues concerning secular morality cannot even be entertained. It is said that whatever is the goal, whether "becoming Brahman or astaining God's presence-*samsara* or the realm of good and evil is transcended"[8]. In this connection, it is also remarked; "By such an end the *Gita* understands something more than moral rectitude. It aims at the elimination of worldly desire-even of the type commonly regarded as legitimate. It does not thus do away with

motives altogether; only it furnishes one and the same motive for whatever we may do, viz. the betterment of our spiritual nature".[9]

But to say that *karma-yoga* is devotion to the discharge of social obligations and at the same breadth to maintain that it, either in the sense of becoming Brahman or in the sense of attaining God's presence, is to transcend the realm of good and evil in the *samsara* (world society) appears to be implausible. If the goal is set in such other-worldly spiritual level of transcendence, how at all it can cater to the need of moral expectation at the worldly or social level of humanity ? It is, of course, found that in certain cases man constructs the idea of divine to inspire him to follow the steps of morality more sincerely. But it should be noted that even in such cases for a seeker of morality, the idea of divine is only to sreve as a means not as an end. For an ethical outlook can never be conceived as being subservient to any higher ideal. If the ideal of *karma-yoga* is ultimately conceived as divinely spiritual transcending the plane of morality at the social realm then there is every danger of its being fallen from the track of intelligibility to the land of mystical incomprehensibility. For any rational outlook cannot consistently accommodate the fusion of morality into spirituality. While the former conception is of secular significance the latter is placed on a total non-secular or transcendental formulation. There is absolutely no incongruity to expect the free flow of morality without any slightest leaning towards spiritual transcendence. It is precisely on this ground one finds in the intellectual-cum-cultural tradition of West a clear discrimination between the conceptual framework of morality and that of religion. Morality is quite autonomous and any religious pre or post sanction of it is neither logically necessary nor practically relevant. To preserve

the mark of morality either at the individual or at the social plane a theological boosting of any sort seems to be not only irrelevant but also is likely to create further conceptual muddle.

Now one may react to this point by saying that whatever may happen in the Western tradition, in India at least there has been effective synthesis between morality and religion. A theistic religious outlook, as advocated in *Gita*, is not trans-moral but only is above the worldly social moral consideration; since that, by being limited to a particular social set up, does have a restricted field of operation. A spiritually based moral set up is all pervasive and universal in its scope and in that way it does not exclude but includes the human expectations.

It may be said here that this suggestion cannot be taken up to support Hiriyanna's point of view as stated before. Because, in his approach, there is a clear indication that *karma-yoga* is distinctly spiritual and is more than moral rectitude. Now, independent of the view expressed by Hirriyanna, let us make a probe into the issue that morality and spirituality are not set apart but those are integrated by means of a higher principle of synthesis. A theistic outlook, as advocated in *Gita*, is not necessarily opposed to social morality in the worldly set up but is rather meant to establish that all moral considerations at the social set up must, at the final end, be evaluated by a transempirical criterion of divinity. In this sense, morality cannot be conceived, at least in this tradition, as apart from spirituality. Whether it is the realisation of Brahman or it is the presence of God, there is the mark of spirituality which is the whole that includes morality within itself.

In spite of this defensive approach, it seems that there is still some confusion left over the issue. Even if it

is granted that in the Indian context of *Gita* there is specific importance to spirituality in the sense that it can never exclude but include morality, it does not become rationally clear that the two are here integrated beyond any controversy. Since spirituality which is a concept having its root in Western tradition, its connotation has to be determined taking that point into consideration. In other words, if it means something of transcendence and of non-secular character then any attempt to wipe out the demarcation between the boundary of morality and spirituality would be rather to create some sort of conceptual confusion. Perhaps Hiriyanna was aware of this difficulty and that is why he has carefully made the suggestion that in the context of *Gita's karma-yoga*, the goal is spiritual and something more than moral. Here morality, from his point of view, may be the means but the end is nothing but spirituality. This at least clearly points out that the two concepts are different. Once the difference is grasped, one can see the autonomous operation of any of these two concepts. Thereby it is not implied that a religious person is bound to be immoral or a moralist is bound to be irreligious. All that is emphasised here is to point out that one can adopt one mode of life quite independent of the other. The logical geography of both the concepts of morality and spirituality is clearly distinct and any move of smuggling the one into the other is never rationally acceptable.

Here it may be said that whatever may be the output of this analytical investigation, it is a fact that there is the presence of both the marks of morality and spirituality in *Gita* and no justifiable interpretation of *Gita* can be accomplished without acknowledging both. Any kind of emph sis of one as against the other, despite the rational

demand, gives rise to, what one may say, an unfaithfully rendering of *Gita*.

It appears that there is some force in this remark. It is a fact that *Gita* refers to both moral upliftment and also to some sort of spiritual attainment. But the issue here is : which is given the primary status. Is it morality or spirituality ? Many tend to believe that at least in *Gita* there is the final supremacy given to spirituality-one unique sort of union of finite with infinite which is not only beyond the ordinary conception of morality but it is also somewhat not intelligible to the normal intellectual set up.

But, in that case, whatever cultural as well as traditional affinity one may have towards *Gita*, one cannot, in all fairness, avoid the critical remark that *Gita*, by sanctioning ultimate supremacy to spirituality over morality, does have a learning towards dogmatism and authoritarianism. It, in spite of its great importance from the sacred point of view, cannot convince a rationally moral conscious being. Because, as it has been already pointed out, a rational enquiry can never consistently accommodate something which is vague and mystical. So also the logic of moral discourse cannot entertain the idea that morality is not autonomous and it has to be subservient to some sort of transcendental spiritual high command.

Now two courses seem to be only possible. Either one accepts the critic's remark that *Gita*, in spite of its having a supreme religious significance, does not convincingly follow the logic of moral discourse and presents a point of view which is highly mystical and thus not rationally defensible, or one is to take recourse to some other

line of exploration by means of which *korma-yoga* in *Gita* can be presented as a philosophically sound doctrine without having any clash with moral presupposition. It appers that a careful reading of the *Gita* particularly so far as *karma-yoga* is concerned, can reveal that there is scope for a different rendering which would safeguard the autonomous character of moral framework.

It seems, the valuational framework that is acceptable to the *Gi'a* is ethical rather than theological. *Karma-yogi*, in the fundamental sense, cannot be conceived as either immoral or amoral but only moral. He cannot deviate from the path of *dharma*. Here by morality, it is meant something which is not applicable to a particular group or society but that which is universally applicable to the whole mankind. It is towards the exploration as well as preservation of that moral law which is an imperative in human life. It is *sue generis* in the sense that its autonomy is never affected by transcendent principle. This means, here morality is not the means but the end in itself. The ultimate goal, so far as *karma-yoga* is concerned, is only moral perfection and nothing else. This can be comprehended when one clearly sees through the logic of moral discourse and well discriminates it from other valuational frameworks. The spiritual value has, of course, been referred to in several passages of *Gita*, but it should be noted that spirituality there only serves as a means for attainment of the end which is precisely ethical. The theological medium is taken up probably for the ignorant mass who cannot all at once move through abstract path of moral reasoning. Bt it is never regarded to be indispensable or necessary for moral enlightment. Rather when

one clearly grasps the distinctive character of moral framework, one can well realise the worthlessness of such obscurant mystical approach.

So far as self-realisation is concerned, the person is able to see oneness in all beings and all beings in one self.[10] This conception of *sarvabhutantaratma* has specific moral significance. *Karma-yoga* never means passivity but implies ceaseless state of activity by way of harmonising all the egoistic and non-egoistic tendencies that man comes across during his life-time. It is the man in whom there is the rise of both devilish and divine *pravrttis*; those are to be shaped, regulated and harmonised in such a manner so that man can best realise himself and attain moral excellence. The ethics of *karma-yoga* is thus only human and never trans-human. As Belvalkar, while elucidating the character of *Gita* (XVI-5), has aptly said : "Be it *daivi* (divine) or be it *asuri* (demoniac), man is the architect of his own *sampad* (fortune), and has no right to lay the blame for it at the door of the *deva* (deity) or the *daiva* (destiny)".[11] In fact, so far as progress in moral life is concernd, man is to take full responsibility and *Gita* never makes any compromise on this issue.

Gita, from philosophical point of view, starts with a basic presupposition that man is endowed with two different faculties, viz. sense and reason. It is presumed that though mostly man is moved towards sensuous enjoyment because of his outer nature of sense and instinct, there is also in him the presence of a deeper sense of rationality by means of which he becomes aware of moral discrimination and thus progresses in the path of *sreya* instead of *preya*. The valuational framework of a *karma-yogi* is only ethical and here it should be noted that the ethical consideration is regulated in terms of reason rather than emotion.

Progress in moral life may be difficult and protracted but for that it need not be thought as impossible. In the ethical sense alone the *Gita's* saying that the doer of good never comes to grief becomes intelligible.[12] Thus it may be concluded that the ethics found in the *Gita* conception of *karma-yoga* is humanistic and never supra-humanistic.

NOTES

1. See S. K. Belvalkar: "The Bhagavad-Gita: A General Review of its History and Character" published in the book: *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. II, Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Institute of Culture, 1962, p. 136.

2. See Chandradhar Sharma: *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasi Dass, 1964, p. 32. Vide also, in this connection, B. G. Tilak's concluding remark in his *Gita-Rahasya* that the *Gita* teaches *jnanamulaka-bhakti-pradhana-karmayoga.*

3. The *Gita*, II, 38-39.

4. M. Hiriyanna: *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, London George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1958, p. 119.

5. The *Gita*, II, 47.

6. The *Gita*, IV, 38..

7. The *Gita*, III, 33 & IX, 27.

8. M. Hiriyanna, op. cit., p. 126.

9. Ibid, pp. 125-126.

10. The *Gita*, VI. 29.

11. Op. cit., p. 154.

12. The *Gita*, VI. 40.

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THE *MAHABHARATA*, A *DHARMASASTRA* IN THE REAL SENSE OF THE TERM

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It is deemed convenient to concur with the concept contained in the statement of the great Vyasa to the effect that by mere lending the attentive ears to the words of the epic under discussion, one need not proceed to the hazardous and painstaking journey to Puskara for earning religious merit :

Yo bharatam samadhigacchati vacyamanam,
Kim tasya puskarajalair abhisecanena. 1.2. 242

None can differ from the view expressed in the statement of this pedantic poet :

Srutva tv idam upakhyanam sravyam anyan rocate,
Pumskekilarutam srutva ruksa dhanksasya vag iva
1. 2.226.

With reservations it may be submitted that though originally a heroic poem dwelling on the bloody battle of the Kauravas and the Pandavas in the land of the Curus (*Kuruksetra*) well-known in the *Yajurveda* and the *Brahmanas*, whereas in the Illiad and in the Nibelungen-song the terrible tragedy of war of annihilation forms the nucleus, this text as we have now, has assumed a monstrous configuration overburdened with materials of variegated nature so much so that the appositeness of the statement is unchallengeable :

Mahattvad bharavattvae ca mahabharatam ucyate.
1.1.209.

Whatever masses of matter contemplated as worthy of mention to the masses, have been collatted and coalesced here and what is interesting is that' matters of diverse interest have been grinded more or less successfully contributing to the creation of a *Mahakavya*, where readers of varied interest may feel appealing attraction. Thus 'in the most remarkable of all literary productions, side by side and intermingled, warlike heroic songs with highly coloured desrciptions of bloody battle-scenes; pious priestly poetry with dissertations, which are often tedious enough, upon philosophy, religion and law; and mild ascetic poetry full of edifying wisdom and full of over-flowing love towards man and beast.' This may very pertinently account for the reason as to why the *Mahabharata*, though an epic and work of poetic art (*kavya*), is considered at the same time as a manual of morality (*sastra*), law and philosophy supported by the oldest tradition (*smrti*) and accordingly furnished with incontestible authority and since immemorial time the text has served the Indians as much for entertainment as for instruction and edification. Vyasa rightly declares :

Arthasastra idam proktam *dharmasastram* idam mahat,
Kamasastram idam praktam vyasanamitabuddhina.
Adi, 2. 83; 62. 23.

In fact the author declares boldly that for enquiring mind on the topics relating to secular life of love and passion (*kama*) as also the spiritual realm of liberation (*moksa*) this text alone promises to deliver the correct goods; and at the same time more or less egoistically it 'goes to aver that anything not recorded here will not be traced elsewhere :

Dharme earthe ca kame ca mokse ca bharatarsabha,
Yad ihasti tad anyatra yan nehasti na kutracit.
(*Svargarohana Parva*;)

What is intended is that in this text all the materials that are specifically generally recorded in the *Srutis*, *Smrtis* and the *Puranas* have been assimilated in one place :

Astadasa puranani dharmasastrani sarvasah,
Vedah sangas tathaikatra bharatam caikathah sthitam.
(*Svargarehana*, V. 45. 46.)

In the light of what has been stated above, it will be my endeavour here to discuss, in short, the claim of the Mahabharata to be regarded as a *Dharmasastra*. Before that it is considered quite rational to have an idea of what is understood by the expression *Dharmasastra*, which has been conveniently translated as the science of righteousness. This again presupposes an idea of what is expressed by the term *Dharma*. In short, the term *Dharma* has turned to be the most controversial one and in this context it is better to adopt and accept the definition of *Dharma* as recorded in the aphorism of the *Mimamsa-darsana* as : *Codanalaksane 'rthe dharmah* (1. 1. 2.)

The interpretation of this rule by Sabara and Kumarila, need not detain us here but it suffices to state that Manu the ancient legislator in the very first verse of the *Manusamhita* : (Chapter II).

Vidvadbhih sevitah sadbhir nityam advesaragibhih,
Hrdayenabhyanujnate ye dharmas tan nibodhata, (II.1.)

has attempted to present a picture of the concept ot *Dharma* which of course is to a certain extent, characte-

rised by vagueness. In another verse, namely the second verse of the same text, chapter I (... *dharman no vakum arhasi*. 1, 2). Manu has used the term *Dharma* which has been explained in a general way by Medhatithi, the great gloss-writer of *Manusamhita*, to the effect that *Dharma* is to be understood as conveying the sense of acts indicatory of duties including prohibitions, strictly according to the Sastric dictates, but not sponsored by any secular motivity :

> Dharmasabdah kartavyakartavayer vidhipratisedhayer adrstarthayes tadvisayayam ca kriyayam drstaprayegah,
> (Medhatithi's commentary on Manu, 1. 2).

This is in clear consonance with the interpretation of the term as in : *rajadharman pravaksyami* (*Manu*, VIII. 1) where also the reference to duty looms large. Kullukabhatta, another commentator of the *Manusamhita* from Bengal, in his *Manvarthamuktavali* initiates a very long and scholastic discussion on the nature of *Dharma* (on *Manu*, II. 1,) and has rightly arrived at the conclusion that in its technical sense *Dharma* is to stand for the acts directly dictated by the Vedas, but leading to ultimate welfare of the individual and the society : *Tatra vedapramanakam sreyahsadhanam jyotistomadi dharma*. This is more clear in the statement contained in the *Bhavisya-purana* : Dharmah sreyahsamuddistam 'Sreye'bhyu dayalaksanam.

It should in short, be pointed out here that since time immemorial the term *Dharma* has been used thousands of times and has passed through several vicissitudes and the concept of spirituality and morality has all along been traced as affiliated with the term. Sometimes, *Dharma* has been personified in the following way; as we notice in the *Mahabharata* :

Adityacandrav anile' nalas ca.........
Dharmas ca janati narasya vrttam// Adi, 74.16

Reference may conveniontly be made to the Vedic passages or *Mantras*, where the exact meaning of the term cannot be ascertained as in : ' tani dharmani prathamany asan' (*R.V*, 1.164. 43; X. 19. 16) ; (prathama' (*R. V*. II. 17.1; 'Sanata dharmani. (*R. V*, LLL. 3.1.).

here being hardly any scope for a long discussion on this particular point, the modest approach in this regard is to refer to the researches in the field by eminent scholars, amongst whom the prominent are :

R.C. Hazra, ' *On the early meaning and scope of the world Dharma*' Paper in the *Our Heritage*, Vol. VII, part-I pp. 15-36 ;

P.V. Kane, History of Dharmasastra, Vol. 1-Part-I, pp, 1-6.;
J. D. M. Derreot. *Religion, Law and State in India*, (London, 1968)

For our purpose here, we should understand *Dharma* as the privileges, dutied and obligations of a man in confermity with the ideal laid down in our *Sastra*, specially the Vedas, as a result of which he may, while living in this secular world, may be affiliated spiritually to a very high moral order, expressed by the term *Rts*. This accounts for the fact in all the texts of *Dharmasastra*, the source of *Dharma* has beeh declared to be the *Srutis* principally :

Dharmam ji jnasamananam pramanam srutih. (Manu, II. 13) In this background we are to understand, at least

for our present topic, what is to be understood by the expression *Dharmasastra*, which also should be treated as a technical science of righteousness, wherein *Dharma* in its secular sense of duty and obligation has been dealt with. (Note here Manu's line of definition :

Dharmasastram to wai smrtih, Manu, II. 10

The subtlest and scholastic discussion on the naure of *Dharma* however cannot be traced in the texts which pass on by the appellations of *Dharmasutras, Sanhitas* and the *Smrtis*, notwithstanding the fact that in bare outlines some facts relating to the sources of *Dharma* are included in those of varieties texts. The rules of Jaimini designated as *Mimansadarsana*, the commentary of Sabarasvamin, the *Slokavartika* of Kumarilabhatta are the mazor texts where the philosophical discussion on *Dharma* are sufficiently enshrined and in the real sense of the term, they deserve to be designated as *Dharmasastra*.

When of course we are to be concerned about *Mahabharata* and *Dharmasastra*, it will be our humble task to make a comparative study of those materials of the *Mahabharata* that shold pertinently form the subjeet matter of the *Smrtisastras*. In a nutshell, one may describe the contents of the *Dharmasastra* in general by stating that they deal with matters concerning the life of a man as member of society from birth to death and over hereafter (*nisekadi smasanantah*). The subject accordingly is likely to cover a long and wide range from out of which restriction and selection are inevitable. Before further restriction of the topic, it is deemed desirable to present in a nutshell the following earth that will enlighten in short the cases where

in the *Mahabharata* the Dharmasastra materials have been principally dealt with :

Parva	Topic
Santiparva : Chap. 40	Coronation (*rajabhiseka*)
Santiparva : 59-130 ; Udyoga Parva : 33-34; Sabha : 5 ; Vanaparva : 150	Rajaniti (Duties of king
Santiparva, 67	Arajaka (Evils of anarchy)
Adiparva, 11; Anu : 115 lff ; *Asvamedhika, P*, 28 and 43; Santi P : 330	Inculeation of the quality of non-violence (ahimsa)
Santiparva; 61, 212-15	Special duties for different stages of life (*asrama-dharma*)
Santi : 60; 65, 297	Special duties for different castes (*Varmdharma*)
Anusasanaparva, 48-49	
Anu. P, 104	*Acara* (Ritualistic observances and formalities)
Anu. P, 106-7	Upavasa (Fasting, literally symbolising approaching nearer the deity)
Santi P. 131ff	*Apaddharma* (Special observances during days of distress and orisis)
Santi P; 234; Vanaparva 186	
Anu P; 57-99	*Dama* (Merits accrued through gifts and charities)
Santi P; 15 121; Udyoga, 130.14	*Danda* (Eulogy for punishment along with its necessity)

Aranyaka, 149. 32 Santi P, 34, 35, 165.34ff	*Prayaseitta* (Expiatory measures)
Anusasana P, 48, 49	*Putrabheda* (Types of sons)
Anusasan P, 45-47	*Dayabhaga* (Principle of inheritance)
Anusasana P. 44-46; Adi, 67.8, 13,12 211,12;122.8;96.11	*Vivahs* (Marriage)
Striparva, 26-27; Anu, P, 87-92; Santi, 111. 19	*Sradha* (Rituals on death)
Santi P. 36, 78; Anu P. 116,13,62 Aranyaka P. 199.11	*Bhaksyabhaksya* (Recommondations and prohibitions for food)
Adi Parva, 7. 3-4 Udyoga Parva 35,37	*Saksi* (witnesses)
Anu P, 129 5; Arapyka P. 118.78;.131.10; Santi P, 21 10; Asvame dhika, 49.31; 49.2; 35.27	*Dharma*

The *Visnudharmasutra*, II. 16-17, while speaking about *Samanyadharma* (i.e *Dharma* to be observed by all in general enlists amongst others the act of paying visits to place of pilgrimage-(*tirthanvsaranam*)

.........ahimsa gurasusrusa tirthanusaranam daya/
.........anabhyasuya ea tatha dharmah samanya ueyate//

Tirthas are called as such because such places are associated

with the persons who used to live there for acquisition of *Dharma* as we gather from the *Skandapvrana* :

> Yadd hi purvatamaih sadbhih sovitam *dharmasiddhaye*/
> Tadd hi punyatamam loke santas tirtham pracaksate//

In consonance with the spirit expressed in the texts of *Dharmasastra*, the *Mahabharata* has numerous references to *Tirthas* and in more than one place, explains the justification for such pilgrimage. In short it has been held that the formalities involved in the performance of sacrifices were many and strictly expensive and therefore not within easy fold of the common people. Therefore for counterbalancing the same the *Sastraekaras* have recommended such pilgrimage : Thus we have in the *Vanaparva* :

> Rsibhih kratavak proktah.........
> Na te sakya daridrona yajnah praptum mahipate/
> Bahupakarana yajna manasambharavistarah//
> Yo daridrair api vidhih sakyam praptum maresvara/
> Tulyo jnaphalaih punyats tan nibedha yudham vara//
> Tirthabhi gamanam punyam ya,mair ani visisyate//

In the *Anusasanparva*, it may be mentioned specially that a holy bath in the *Tirthas* has not been accorded a highly dignified position. What has been insisted on is purification of mind and control of the sense-organs. Thus it has been held :

> Nodakakinnagatras tu snata ity abhidhiyate/
> Sa snate ye damasnatah sa vakyabhyantarah sucih/
> 108.9

The *Mahabharata* abounds with detailed discussions on many points relating to the *Ttrthas* and the epic materials

on this point is as rich as those contained in the *Dharma-sastra*. In the *Vanaparva* (Chap. 82-156) and the *Salyaparva* (Chap. 35-54) also there are about 3900 verses on *Tirthayatra*.

(Special reference is to be made here the list of *Tirthas* in the Appendix to the *History of Dharmasastra* Vol. IV, PP. 730-825)

From an analysis of the above-noted list, it may be shown that the major materials of *Dharmasastra* are contained in the *Adiparva Santiparva* and the *Anvsasanaparva* of the *Mahabharata* Therein also they have not been systematically arranged as is quite natural, since the epic is not dedicated to the study of *Dharmasastra* materials principally. It is only in certain contexts and conversations that they have been set Thus for example, in the episode of Duhsanta and Sakuntala in the *Mahabharata* Duhsanta in his proposal for marriage referred to the facts relating to marriage as stated by Manu Svayambhuva. (Adi, 67. 8-14). More specifically in the *Santiparva* the tendency is to make mention of the rules of *Dharmsaastra* on any pretext whatsoever. One example will suffice to substantiate the position. Thus the rules relating to *Aeara* have been enunciated in the *Santiparva* by Bhisma in chapter, 186 when the initiative on such point was forthcoming from Yudhisthira almost without any specific context thus :

Achrasya vidhim taat procyamnam tvyamagha/
Srotum icohami dharmajna sarvajne hy asi me matah//
186. 2.

All these are indication of the fact that the author of this epic in particular made it him point to insert and enshrine the

matters of Dharmasastra evidently with the purpose of inviting appeal of the masses. If not interpreted in this light these materials of the *Mahabharata* may appear unsuitable to the context and often irrevant. But Indian mind was receptive to such Sastric directives without any hesitation and disrespect. For us, these materials offer interesting sources of study in view of the fact that on a comparative study we may realise how far the *Dharmasastra* materials were the same or different from those actually recorded in the texts of *Dharmasastra*.

The chart shown above beyand doubt proves that the subject in this context is vast and varied and in such seminars the only course open is to specify a certain section and to make a study on the same. I have preferred to select here the topic of marriage and its forms wherein comparative study will be made between the materials of the *Smrtis* and the *Mahabharata*.

In the *Anvsasana Parva* (hereafter to be abbreviated as *A.P.*) the half verse of Manu has been quoted to the effect that in marriage *Sapinda* and *Sagotra* relationship is to be strictly avoided :

Asapinda ca ya matur asagotra ca ya pituh/
Ity etam anugacchot tam dharmam Manur abravit//

A.B, 44.17

This is exact recording of the Manu,s view on marriage in respect of the selection of the bride :

Asapinda ca ya matur asagotra ca ya pituh/
Sa prasasta dvijatinam darakarmani maithune//

Manu, III 5

(F. N: we may refer here to the fact that Raghunandana as also other digest-writers dealing with definition and other facts relating to marriage have referred to and explained this verse *Mahabharata* and *Manu*. See specially the *Udvakatattva* of Raghunandana. p. 1)

In this context in general in both the texts we find discussions on the desirable qualities of the bride. Thus in the *Anu P.* we find :

Mahakulaprasutam ea prasastam laksanais tatha/
Vayabstham ea mahaprajna kamyam avedhum arhati/
107,116
Pingalam kusthinim narim na tvam avodhum arhasi. ".125
Apasmsrikulo jatam nihinam caiva varjayet./
Svitrinam ea kulo jatam trayanam manujesvara// 107.126

Parallel to these ideas we find in the text of Manu much more detailed materials (see Manu III. 6-11).

In the form in which Apastamba in his *Dharmasvstra* has declared that oneness of the husband and wife is effected through marriage both in spiritual and secular matters and as a result of which no separation between them is possible:

Jayapatyor vibhage na vidyate II. 6. 14. 16
Panigrahanad dhi sahatvam karmasn. II.6.14.17

Tatha puryaphalesm; dravyaparigrahesu ca II.6.14 18-19 the *Mahabharata* declares :

Bharyapatyer hi sambandhab stripumses tulya eva sah/
Ratib sadharano dharma iti caha sa parthiyah// Anu P. 45-10

The question arising out of variety of *Samskaras* or formalities of marriage, pressed the mind of both the

epic-writer and Dharmasastra-writer. Thus Manu declares that the mantras relating to the rite of *Pānigrahana* contribute to wifehood, which finds complete in the formality called *Saptapadi* :

Panigrahanika mantra niyatam daralakyanam/
Tesam nistha tu vijoeya vidvadbhih saptame pade//
VIII227

The epic voices the same view :

Panigrahanamantranam nistha syat saptams pade.
Anu. P. 44. 53

The writers on *Dharmasastra* recognise eight forms of marriage and the forms are called as such because of the mode of procuring a birde for marriage (vivahasampadaka danadibhodat brahmadibhedah-Udvahatattva, p. 1). Thus we have from Manu :

Brahme daivas tathaivarsah prajapatyas tathasurah/
Gandharva raksasas caivapaisacas eastame' dhamah//III.21

The Adiparva of the epic records the eight forms of marriage and the names have also been mentioned in different verses. Thus :

Astav eva samasena vivaha dharmatah smrtah/
Brahme daivas tathaivarsah prajapatyas tathasurah//
Adi, 67.8

Gandharve raksasas caiva paisacas eastamah smrtah.
7, 67.9

The *Dharmasastra*-writers do not lay so much emphasis on the self-choice form of marriage (*Svayamvara*) evidently the spirit of the form of marriage is not in proper consenance with the dependence of the women in general, notwithstanding the fect that the concept of Svayamvara is not greek to the ideals of Sastra. As the epic extels the aotivities of the kings and the princes belonging to the class of the Ksatriyas, the Svayamvara form of marriage has been spoken highly of in favour of the Ksatriyas :

Svayamvarah ksatriyanam vivahah purusarsabha/
Adi, 211.21

Svayamvram tu rajanyah prasamsanty upayanti ca/
Pramathya hu hrtam ahur jyayasim samavadinah/
Adi, 16.11

The second line of the last-mentioned verse has of course reference to the Raksara form of marriage, which also has been declared to be the privilege of the Ksatriyas because of their valorous activities. The definition of this form is almost the same in both the text under reference. Thus we find in the Mahabharata :

Hatva ehitva ca sisani rudatam rudatim grhat/
Prasahya haranam tata raksasam dharmalaksanam
Anu, 44 7

This is almost exactly the same in language and spirit as we find in manu :

Hatva chittva ca bhittva ca kresantim rudatim grhat
Prasahya kanyaharanam raksase vidhir neyate III.33

The definition of the Brahma form of marriage in essence is that here the bride is given ever in marriage to a groom after he is respectfully approached because of his attainments :

Aeehadya eareayitva ca srutasilavata svayam/
Ahuya danam kanyayah brahme dharmah pracaksate//
Manu, III. 27

Almost similar in the epic :

Silavrta samajnaya vidyam yonim ca karma ca/
Adbhir eva pradatuvya kanya gunavate vare//
Brahmansanam satam esa dharama nityam yudhisthira//
Anu. 44.3

This should be interpreted in the light of Braham form though it is not specifically mentiened here. We have another verse in the Adiparva :

Ahuya danam kanyanam gunavadbhyah smrtam budhaih/
Alamkrtya yathasakti pradaya ca dhanany api Adi, 96.8

This form has been acelaimed to be the best of the forms by Manu, III. 37.

The Daiva form of marriage has not been defined by in the epic, but according to Manu, in this form the bride is given away to the efficiating priest in recognition of the service rendered in the sacrifice. Evidently the green should be a Brahmin :

Yajne tu vitate samyag rtvije karma kurvate
Alamkrtya sutadanam daivam dharmam pracaksate
III.28

The epic does not define the *Arsa* form though the concept of the same was not unknown to the epic as we may gather from the line : Prayacehanty apare kanyam mithunema gavam api. (Adi, 96.9). The definition is in the *Manvsmrti* thus :

Ekam gemithunam dva va varad adaya dharmatah
Kanyapradanam vidhivat arse dharman sa ucyate III.29

The most controversial form of marriage, passing on in the name of the Asurs, interestingly invites our attention. It is the form in which the bride Is procured through payment of money to the guardian :

Dhanena bahudha kritve sampralobhya ca bandhavan
Asuranam nrpaitam vai dharmam ahur manisinah
Anu. 44.6

In spirit it is the same as we find in Manu :

Jnatibhy dravinam dettva kanyayai caiva saktitah
Kanyapradanam svacchandayad asure dharma ucyate
III.31

That this form was not a commendable one is proclaimed in both the texts almost in the same language :

Paisasas casures caiva na kartavyam kadaecama
Manu, III.25
Exactly identical line is recorded in the Mahabharata.
Anu, P. 44.8

Many as a writer of social science finds it very difficlt to justify such a provision of the Sastra recommending the

procurement of a bride through price. This hardly adjust with the high ethical values attached to marriage in ancient India. In one place in the ninth chapter of his text Manu declarer that he did not have any knowledge of sale of girls in marriage :

Nanususruma jatv etat purvesv api he janmasu
Sulkasanjnena mulyena chanmam duhitrvikrayam
IX.100

He condemns this even in the uase of the *Sudras* :

Adadita Sudro. pi suklam duhitaram dadam
Sulkam he grhnan kurute chanmam duhitrvikrayam
IX.98

The *Mahabharata* contains in it some references to sulka. Thus in consonance with what has been stated in the text of Manu. Thus exactly in the same language it has been held that the pair or to of kine accepted in the Arsa form should not be treated as Sulka in as much as sulka carries with it the concept of sale :

Arse gomithunam sulkam Keoid ahur mrsaiva tat
Alpam va sahu va rajan vikrayas tavad eva sah
Anu, 45.21 = Manu, III. 53

Again in tune with that of Manu. the Mahabharata declare that dowry even if it is taken from the groom will not tantamount to sale if the father or guardians do not usurp the same in their own interests :

Yasyah kimcin nadadate jnataye na sa vikrayah.
Anu P, 45.1

Manu is more specific in his statement :

Yasam nadadate sulkam jnataye na sa vikrayah
Arhanar tat Kumarinam anrsamsyas ca kevalam III.54

The epic directs that anything taken as such from the groom-suiter should be handed over to the bride : Sarvam ca pratidcyam syat kanyayai tad asesatah. Anu, 46.2

The idea appears to be the same as contained in the verse :

Pratigrhya bhaved deyam esa dharamh sanatamah.
Anu. 44.32

The *Anv P,* expresses view against purchase and sale of bride as we find in the two verses :

Ye ca krinanti dasivat ye ca vikrinate janah
Bhavet tesam tatha nistha lubdhanam papacotasam
44.46

Yo manucyah svakam putram vikriya dhanam icohati
Kanyam va jivitarthaya yah sulkena prayacehati
45.19

For such a person the penal measures have been outlined in the next verse.

We do not get any definition or idea of the *Prajapatya* form of marriage although as we have already seen. the epic mentions such a form (prajapatya) in the list of the eight forms of marriage (Adi, 67.8). This non-mention snould not be interpreted otherwise for the fact is that the epic is not to be taken as emboding all the precepts of

Dharmasastra in a systematic manner. These facts are mentioned only casually. In short, in the contemplation of *Dharmasastras* the *Prajapatya* form of marriage is the only form which is supposed to encourage monogamy since in it the groom, being a suiter, is bound by the condition that she should be made an associate in the discharge of religious affairs and that during the period of her life the husbanad must not marry again or enter into another stage of life. Thus we have in Manu :

Sahobhau caratam dharmam iti vacsnubhasya ca
Kanyapradanam abhyareya prajapatye vidhih smrtah
III.30

The *Gandharva* form of marriage is one, according to the *Dharmasastras*, in which both the groom and the bride, independent of the parents, become united in marriage, which in modern context is regarded as the best :

Icchayayonyasamyogah kanyayas ca varasya ca/
Gandharvah sa tu vijneya maithunyah kamasambhavah//
Manu. III.32

The epic however, appears to bring in a certain sense the guardians also since in the definition it has been held that in the *Gandharav* form the bride is to be given over to the groom who is regarded as favourable by her :

Abhipreta tu ya yasya tasmai deya yudhisthira/
Gandharvam iti tam dharmam prahur dharmavido janah//
Anu, 44.5

In a certain context Dushsanta in the Adiparva of the epic (67.4) speaks of this form as the best :

Vivahanam hi rambhoru gandharvah srestha ucyate.

In the light of the discussion relating to the forms of marriage as contained in the *Mahabharata*, it may be concluded safely that the materials herein are quite in consonance with that what we find the text of Manu, which is regarded as the most authoritatative text on Dharmasastra as is evident from the statement :

Manvarthaviparita ya sa smrtir na prasasyate.

Thus the Mahabharata is of inestimable value from the standpoint of Dharmasastra also since as we have just seen, there are materials common and similar and modern research demands that even for verification of different readings in both the texts a critical study is desideratum.

It would be of interest here to note that like the *Srnti* and *Smrtis* the *Mahabharata* also was accorded the status of authoritativeness. The *Smrtinibandhas* in a very good number of cases have referred to the passages from the *Mahabharata* as authoritative. For a systematic collection of the passages from the Mahabharata quated in the Smrtinibandhas, see Sures Chandra Banerji, *Smrti Material in the Mahabharata*, Vol. 1 (Text), Calcutta, 1972, pp. 444-540.

See specially, Bhavatosh Bhattacharya, *Raghvnandan's indebtedness to his predvcessers*, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1955;and therein pp. 48-51 for references by Raghunandan to the Mahabharatic passages in his *Tattvas*.

See in this context specially, P.V. Kane, *The Mahabharata verses and very ancient Dharmasastra and other works*, Thomas press. Bombay, 1939.

—X—

THE MAHABHARATA

Some Legal Aspects.

Shradhakar Supakar

Parasaryavabh Sarojam amalam gitartha gandhotkatam/
nanakhyanake kesaram Harikatha sambodhana bodhitam/
Loke sajjana satpadairaha rahah retiyamanaim muda/
bhuyad bharatapankajam kalimatapradhvamisi nah sruyase/

The Mahabharata is a golden treasury of problems for scholars in Dharmasastra. Dharma Sastras deal with the problems of law and custom in ancient India, Even for a modern lawyer who is interested in the evolution of the personal laws of the Hindus, the Mahabharata is a rich source of information.

The whole complex plot of the epic the *Ramayana* originates from a single question of law namely " Has the favourite wife the right to influence her husband to change the course of succession" ? Strictly speaking, King Dasaratha had no right to ask Sri Rama to step down from the throne infavour of Bharata, because under the law, the first born is the successor to the throne. But Sri Rama (with Sita and Laxman) went to the forest to fulfil the promise which his father had made without even knowing its contents: Of course, those were the days when 'Patria Potestas' or the right of the father over the lives and deaths of the children, the wives and the slaves were supreme. And the unwitting promise of the father superseded the universal law of primogeniture in the *Ramayana.*

The story of *Mahabharata* has an almost parallel beginning. King Shantanu, a widower of long standing is infatuated with Yojana Gandha, the youthful daughtert of a tribal Chief and is determined to have her for his wife at any cost. The heavy price is paid by prince Devavrata who vows not merely to reliuquish the throne but also to live the life of a celibate, come what may. Here too, the davotion of the son to the father at the cost of violating the law of primogeniture is allowed to prevail.

Those were perhaps the days, when sage Viswamitra wanted his sister's son Sunahshepa (or Devarata) to be recognised as his eldest hair by all his hundred natural born sons and when the first fifty sons of Viswamitra refused to agree to that proposal, they were disinherited. Those were also the day when those elder sons of King Yajati, who refused to part with their youth in favour of the father were disinherited.

In the Mahabharata, the unexpected happened, Satyavati gave birth to two sons who died issueless. Bhisma refused to break his vow. There was nobody to rule the Kingdom. There was no heir. Satyavati persuaded the widows to agree to levirate (niyoga) and She chose her own son Vyasa to beget issues through levirate. There was at least a generation gap between Vyasa and the widows. The rules of levirate had to be followed strictly Vyasa massaged his body with a lot of ghee before he approached the senior widow for union. Vyasa's beard and long hair and appearance frightened the widow out of her wits and she closed her eyes tight during the embrace of levirate. She gave birth to a blind son in due time.

Blind persons are not entitled to inheritance according to the Dharmasastra. And the son Dhrutarastra could not become the King when he grew up. So the problem was not

solved. According to law, blind, impotent, outcaste and persons suffering from serious physical defects were not entitled to inheritance.

So Satyavati ordered another Niyoga or levirate, again through her son Vyasa. This time she gave strict instruction to the other widow not to clese her eyes even if she become afraid of her brother-in-law, She obeyed her mother-in-law literally but she was so much frightened that she was pale with bright and later on gave birth to an anaemic and weakling son named Pandu. Pandu was impotent, through he had two wives and none of his five sons were born of his lion.

Both Dhrtarastra and Pandu were ksetraja sons and all the sons of Pandu were also ksetraja sons. As is well known, ancient Indian law, speaks of eight forms of marriage and eight forms of sons. Ksetraja sons could be considered if there were no Aurasa or natural born son trough legally wedded wife. The custom of levirate is illustrated thus in Mahabharata. This process of begetting of a son by a widow, usually through the younger brother of the deceased husband has been strongly condemned in the Manusmruti as Pasudharma Vigarhita. According to the scriptures it is Kalivarjya-not permissible in the Kali age.

The story becomes complicated from a lawyer's point of view, when King Pandu dies leaving his sons and nephews minors. The children grow up under the guardianship of grandfather Bhisma. Judhistira is the eldest son of the deceased King. But the sons of a disqualified. heir are disgualified. When the children grew up, who should have been the King-Judhistira or Duryodhana ?

The problem becomes complicated by intrigues. Duryodhan trying to kill Bhima and setting fire to the house of Yatu (lac). and the wanderings of the Pandavas.

Another very important problem is the Swayambara of Draupadi. Draupadi chooses only Arjuna for his marvellous feat or archery. But she becomes the common wife of all the five brothers, through the absent-minded words of mother Kunti. Is it permissible for a mother to ask his sons to share a common daughter-in-law ? That is the custom among some societies in the Himachal Pradesh. But here the question arises, when a Khatriya or for that matter any male could have as many wives as he pleased or could afford, why the question of sharing one wife should have arisen at all.

Bhima and Arjuna had other wives of their cwn. Their adventures and marriages illustrate some of the unapproved forms of marriage prescribed in the Dharmasastras. According to Manusanhita, Gandharva and Raksasa forms of marriage are approved forms for Kshatriyas. The marriage of Bhima with Hidimba, after the fight with her relatives could be in the Raksasa form. So was the marriage of Arjuna with Subhadra. Vyasa narrates the story of the Gandarva marriage of Dushyanta with Shakuntala. It my be mentioned here that if the sage Kanva were present in the Ashram when Dusyanta arrived there, the marriage of Dusyanta and Shakuntala would have been in the Kaya or Prajapatya form.

Mahabharata also deals with Pratiloma marriage-marriage of a woman of a higher caste with a man of lower caste. Here Devayani wishes to marry King Yayati, who consents to marry with great reluctunance, for fear of incurring the wrath of the sage Sukra. Their conjugal life is not happy. Caste system was not rigid those days. The most unusual feature of the Mahabharata is the unholy gambling scene. Nobody does lose his kingdom by gambling. Yudhistira had no right to put his brothers, his wife and ultimately himself to stake, and lose everything. No land provides for such

a contingency. Here again, we apply the right of patria potestas. The eldest brother is like the father and the father has the power of life and death over his wives sons (here brothers) and slaves.

The Pandavas and Draupadi are banished for twelve years and live incognito for a year.

There are other legal problems, Shikhandi is known a girl and when she grows up she marries a princess. There can not be a valid marriage between to persons of the same sex. But here it happens. Sikhandi larter becomes a male but impotent.

The Mahabharata is full of stories of strange customs, which were perhaps valid in ancient India but which have become obsolete in the course of ages. Some of the customs are in conflict with the law and morality but as has been said by Narada" *Vyavaharastv balavan dharmastenavahiyati*.

" We learn so much about the law of diplomacy and belligerency from the Mahabharata, that a text book on the above subject can be written with the Mahabharata as the source boek. The killing of Ambhimanyu by the seven Maharathis, the killing of Karna, when his chariot was struck in mud, the killing of Bhisma, when he refused to sight with the impotent Shikhandi, the killing of Drona, when had laid down his bow and arrows are illustration of the rules of battle as it prevailed those days. There must be no battle after sunset and before sunrise. Fight must be between equals.

Details of statecraft have also been given in many places in the epic. The duty of an ideal ruler, Rajasuya a nd

Aswamedha sacrifices are described at some lenth. The veteran Bhisma, Drona and Bidura advise the younger generation about the proper conduct.

Inspite of the belief that the events of the Mahabharata occurred at least six thousand years ago, it is belived by eminent scholars that Kautilya's Arthasastra and the Mahabharata were written contemperaneously. How much of the chapters on diplomacy in Arthasastra are reflected in the narratives and principles laid down in the Mahabaharata can also be a very interesting study.

How far and in which direction have we progressed in the field of international law ? Night warfare, use of poison gases in battles, wanton destruction of life and property, killing innocent people by bombing from the air and destruction of prosperous cities by atomic bomb are matters of current history.

It is said that inspite of the perpetual conflict between the Kauravas and the Pandavas Shanta Rasa is the main Rasa in the Mahabharata. As a fact, it has proved the futility of war and now essential is peace for the welfare of mankind. The consideration of *paropakar* versus *parapidana*, *punya* versus *papa* is said to be the ultimate lesson of tha voluminous epic. Man has not learnt that simple lesson through so many millenia.

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RAJYATANTRA IN THE SHANTIPARVA OF THE MAHABHARATA

Rangadhar Sarangi

The Mahabharata and the Arthasastra of Kautilya deal elaborately with rajyatantra, the story or science of Government. There are quite a large number of chapters in the Santiparva devoted excusively to the topic under discussion. Rajyatantra includes the duties of a ruler, statesmanship or politics, sovereignty, royal sceptre, royal insigniastate affairs regalia royal convent and consecration and royal parapharnelia etc. Important and indispensable limbs of royality, different types of Govennment and subversion of sovereignty etc., are also discussed under rajyatantra. About state and its administrative matter many valuable date are available here arresting the attention of a reader. Some chapters deal with the succession rights of the ruler's descendant and the responsibilities of the ministers. Some deal with the system of taxation, the tribute paid by the tributary princes, and the duties of Government servants in key-position. The *Ramayana* also deal with this subject in detail and points out the demerits of a state affected by anarchy. However its treatment as a whole is not as it is in the *Mahabharata*. The *Mahabharata* still remains unsurpassed by any other treatise anterior to it in its treatment of foreign policy, art of warfare, treaty alliance with neighbouring states and diplomacy with enemies. Besides the *Santiparva*, the Sabha, Adi and the Aranyaka also deal with the subject though with less detail.

According to the *Mahabharata* the rajya i. e. Kingship or Kingdom came into being in the Krtayuga when there was neither King nor Kingdom, neither punishment nor the punisher. It is becomes the people or subjects at that time lives in mutual harmony protecting each other by *dharma* or rule that upholds all to live. " Do not do unto others what you do not want to be done unto you" wa s the concept of *dharma* at that time. Live and let live was the ideal followed by all. They did not yet enter into the intricacies of the so-called sectarian *dharma* of religion which seized the mind of the people later. They understood *dharma* only in the sense of justice and morality. That way of living continued for a long time no doubt, but couldnot persist for all time due to loss of confidence caused by the force of time. People gradually felt unsecured, became depressed and slowly daviated from the path of piety. An indifferent attitude to *dharma* everywhere was sharply marked. They became whimsical in their observance of the code of morality. So the necessity of a ruler was felt in the society to avert unprecedented misery and suffering. In any stete where people deviate from virtue to vice, a ruler becomes necessary to bring them back to right path. Thus moral decadence in society gave rise to kingship every where to solve crisis. This view of the origin of kingship is also corroborated by *Ramayana*. " In a country governed by anarchy, there is nothing to be called one's own. There is no protection to life and property either. Then the strong exploit the weak in the same way as the big fish eat away the small owns". in other words physical strength or might is then the only right to survive. The *Mahabharata* in this context describes how anarchy was everywhere replaced by monarchy which gradually gives rise to democracy in the long run. It duly establishes divinity in the King's person while describing him as an incarnation of *Visnu*, the protector and the sustainer of all beings. The King assumes five different forms at a time in order to execute five types of

wok for the benefit and well-being of his subjects. He becomes Agni (god of fire) with terrible glow to consume the sins committed by his people. He takes the form of the sun-god while noticing the activities of his people through spies. He becomes as fierce as Antaka while striking the evil-doers at their roots. Even his own sons, grandsons, cordial relation and ministers are not spared if they commit wrongs. He appears as Yama while punishing the sinners with mild of severe penalty and rewarding the pious with prosperity they deserves. He behaves like Vaisravana or Kuvera while showering gold and silver in the houses of his subjects in order to make them wealthy and economically sound. Besides monarchy it also describes the merits and demerits of the other types of Government. In this context it mentions about the type of people to be chosen for the cabinet ministry of a democratic government. The ministers fit for the cabinet should be vastly learned in politics, heroic and energetic in temperament, firm and quick in decision, grave in expressing views and sweet-tempered public dealings . They should pay due respect to superiors and officers at work. They should also know to use weapons (sastra) properly and interpret the Sastra in its true import. They should rescue people during odd hours. People thrive in that type of democracy which gives utmost importance to diplomatic relations and public finance. The ruler should appoint witty and intelligent spies to know the internal affairs of the neighbouring states. The most important duty of the ruler is to assure safety to the people under all circumstance. He should take oath to do so and in case of failure in action he should be dethroned at once, rather killed by the people like a mad dog. The King should treat the welfare of his subjects as an item of topmost priority just as a lady carrying a child in her womb thinks all along

of the well-being of that child till delivery. When people's interest or mass interest is slighted for selfish ends, greed for sexsual pleasure entertained, power misused, the innocent is oppressed and duty is neglected, then the people rise in revolt. They become tyrannical and rebel to over-throw the Government. They take to subversive activities leading to lawlessness and sabotage. Dharma cannot thrive in a state without a government to execute law and order. Thus when anarchy prevails, people go on exploiting each other without any check. Murder, theft, rape and adultery etc. become rampant. Then for peace and prosperity and for restoration of status quo, people badly need the presence of a ruler. Even the offenders themselves donot have a sigh of comfort in the absence of the ruler. The Mahabharata describes the beneful effects of anarchy figuratively in the following manner. They to unite to steal one, and many unite to steal too The unfettered is fettered and the ladies are helplessly kidnapped. In a situation like this the dandadhara holding the royal sceptre is the only saviour, the only hope of survival. The chief epithet of the ruler is dandadhara whose main duty is chastise the wrong-doers Once they are set right, normalcy is easily restored. People breathe a sigh of relief when the society remains protected from the misdeeds of the mischief-mongers. The Mahabharata emphasizes the necessity of the ruler not meerly for discharge of formal duties but chiefly for the practice of i.e. administration of justice. By practice of dharma along he becomes fit for divinity. On the contrary, he purges in hell till eternity due to commitment and vicas. He is called raja because in him the dharma takes refuge. It is his lookout to protect and propitiate the subjects under all circumstance utter truth on all occasions and be simple and unassuming in all affairs. He should not deprive anyone of his property

movable or immovable, rather give one in time what one deserves to get. He should not tread on wrong track at any cost nor deviate from truth and morality on any occasion. He should be forgiving by nature and look after the four varnas (castes) and their duties. He is verily the creator and destroyer of beings. He is acknowledged as creator while executing dharma and destroyer while committing adharma. The earth shines with prosperity provided the five requisites of regal administration are properly looked into:- They are : 1. defence 2. Court of justice 3. warfare 4. instruction in statement 5. diplomacy. It is said in this context that there is as much crime in killing the innocent as there is in not killing the culprit or the one who ought to be killed. So the king should be cautious and strict enough in keeping most suitable persons for judgement. In the absence of justice, people may turn out ferocious like wolves fighting tooth and nail to finish each other. That ruler may be declared as strong-rooted with whom his ministers are pleased and under whose regime both the rural and the urban folk prosper with sympathy for the distressed and become wealthy particularly in paddy and other crops. It is also advised that to prosper in technology the king should initiate the craft of a gardener who for healthy growth of plants, replants, the seedlings, plucks out the flowered, manures the weakened, roots out the diseased, scatters the compressed, bends down the elevated and elevates the dwarfed plants. On no account ruling power should be delegated to the hands of officers. Those who do so and roll in luxury in their royal mansions are bound to lose everything in the long run They shouldnot rely on anyone's loyalty, as no one is indeed reliable in power-politics. Addicted to wine and woman they simply prove their foolishness in statecraft by appointing substitutes who act no better than cats put in charge of the milk-pots.

They should at times maintain apparently idle and good for-nothing fellows almost as an emergency measure like Siva maintaining useless attendants in lounge with the project of utilising their services in future. Siva is the most ideal character for politicians to follow. He manifests apparently contradictory characteristics like digesting the Kalakuta poison for the good of creation and consuming Cupid, the god of love, the loss of creation. The destructive the final deluge of the universe is reduced to a small size and sheltered within his third eye on the forehead. Though shining with his own potencies, he still gives shelter to the crescent moon on his head and supports the ruthless Ganges within his matted locks. The politicians may learn further from his behaviours though apparently incomprehensible. He holds the pinaka bow in hand anb makes the ten quarters his wearing garment. He adorns his body with ashes and embraces a lady. While embracing a lady, he kills cupid, the god of love. His pet attendant Bhrngi is unable to make out anything of these contradictory habits of his Lord and so is reduced almost to skeleton out of confusion. There is advice for rulers not to act like Duryodhana slighting Drona old in age, pure in conduct, well-versed in Brahminic love, competent in archery and heroic in battle-field.

The Mahabharata also describes about the conduct and behaviour of ministers. The ministers are advised to be well-versed in the study of ethics and politics and speak only to the ruler. They should not discuss any matter with princes may even with officers whom they consider ignorant. They should observe silence if their stand-point is not appreciatsd. Some ministers with dexterity manage to persuade their masters for wrong act simply to gain their

favour. They are no better than black-bees clinging to ears with buzzing melody to procure selfish ends. The ruler should beware of such ministers. He should not be carried away by their sweet flatter without a thorough examination. In maitnance of law and order words whetted with righteousness and nobility are to be entertained for in times of prosperity, many would appear in his court-yard for gift and award, but in times of adversity few faithful servants only appear to render voluntary service to him. It is always safe to quiet and reserve before masters who dig their own grave out of arrogance. But the true servant for any reason cannot keep quiet since he wants to save his master from any odd situation even at the cost of his life. Those who drag their master to the whirlpool of addition by exaggerating his capacity do really no useful service to him. On the other hand, they play the role of hypocrites to ruin him in the long run. Teachers of politics say that flow of rivers, wealth of the rich, power of rulers, friendship of villains, fate of enemies and beauty of girls do not last for ever. Brhaspati and Sukra teach three types of politics such as (i) *aihika* (ii) *amvsmika* and (iii) *aihikamusmika* according to difference in aims and objects. When politics aims at mere material prosperity enjoyable here, it is called *aihika*. It is *amusmika* when it is applied for spiritual prosperity alone to be enjoyed hereafter. It is both *aihika* and *amusmika* provided it aims at both material and spiritual prosperity, to be enjoyed on different planes. Out of the three types of politics, the third one is the best as it brings in both kinds of prosperity. The second type i.e. *amvsmika* is the next best since it aims only at spiritual prosperity, but the first one i.e. *aihika* is the worst type of politics as it is only confined to material happiness experienced here. This diffenence in types of politics can only be noticed by

persons of sharp insight. If a minister out of greed for power commits regicide, or deposes the monarch through treachery he is doomed to suffer the torments of hell in after-life. Ministers are not expected to violation the King's order, since violation of order amounts to serious offence like killing a bride or a Brahmin. Therefore the sin committed by regicide is so severe as cannot be expressed by shesa in thousand months. The *aihika* politics prompts the minister to kill his master by poison or other means in order to capture power himlself. In the *amusmika* type. the minister is liberal and considerate. Far from being hostile to his master, he is rather prepared to endanger his own life to make his master's position safe and secure. The third type of politics in the best because the minister following its tenets never entertains any thought of doing the least harm to his master, inspite of possessing means to depose him from power and rule the subject himself. The wise and far-sighted rulers always consieder their intelligence to be their minister, those addicted to luxury and sensual pleasure consider their chief consort or lady-love as minister but those of pedigree and valour consider the sword or the sceptre alone as the only minister. The rulers should again learn from the fate of the lotus and the lily that no one continues to enjoy absolute power for ever, nor anyone becomes absolutely powerless for ever. Everyone is bound to move through inevitable ups and down in life. When the lotus blooms with radiance, the lily looks pale with contracted petals and vice versa. The Mahabharata was earlier designnated as Jaya meaning victory. He who listens to this, conquers the earth and exterminates the enemies. Therefore every ruler should read this epic with due attention, because born of a Ksatriya mother, he is expected to be heroic and painstaking. He should always be ready to give to the

poor, protect the distressed, punish the wicked, fight the injustice and respect the old. The effort he makes to devastate others statusque should rather be diverted to improve his own. There is one kutasloka with obscure meaning is important for the rulers to know as it describes the way of attaining real happiness. To become happy he should ascertain the *two* by *one*, overcome the *three* by *four*, win over the *five*. know the *six* and give up the *seven*.

The word *one* here stands for conscience because by conscience alone he can ascertain the *two* i. e. the right and the wrong. He should overcome the three types of relation namely friend. foe and the neutral by the four expedients such as mildness, gift, punishment and dissension. He should win over the five organs of sense i. e. the eye, the nose, the tongue and the skin. He should Know the six means of security such as alliance, conflict, expedition, settlement, duplicity and dependence. He should give up the seven types of indulgence such as 1. adultery, 2. gambling, 3. hunting prey, 4. drinking wine, 5. scolding with harsh words, 6. cruelty in punishment, and 7. extravagance in expenditure. The ruler should be over-cautions about the secret wing. because secrecy confind to two ears only yields good results. If it spreads to four or six it spreads every where and in no secrecy at all. The Mahabharata also speaks of the party discipline in democracy. That party is

bound to divindle where single leadership is not respected where all think to be wise and competent and all crave for power and position. State craft according to the Mahabharata is organized by nine important limbs such as the monarch. The Prime Minister, the friendly state, the treasury, the territory, the stronghold, the army, the citizens and the spiritual advisor. It is mentioned in one place not to have reliance on the rajakula which literally meana the King's race or the royal family. But it is here used in the sense of the Government office, or the royal palace or the court where law is administered. The Santiparva thus gives an exhaustive account on rajyatantra which can hadly be discussed in detail in an article like this which is exclusively meant for this seminar.

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SPYISM IN THE AGE OF THE MAHABHARATA

C. K- Shukla

The Mahabharata epitomizes ancient Indian history, traditions, culture, society etc. It deals with the whole sphere of Indian life, just like a mirror. It's main theme relates to the great war of Kauravas and Pandavas. So it is quite natural that it describes the political ideas of those days.

Within the four-fold knowledges Dandaniti or politics finds an important place. (1) The Mahabharata is not a work of political science, but it is an encylopaedia of Indian culture, traditions and society. As such it deals with political ideas of ancient India also. In the age of the Mahabharata spying was considered indispensable for the smooth functioning of the state. Spying was a very important wing of the government. A king becomes a real king when he looks at all the beings through his spies—

Mithyopacarito raja tada bharcti pavakah
yada pasyati carena sarvabhvtaini bhumipah. (2)

Later on Kautilya also says that a king expands his eyes through his spies—"*carena eaksul*" (3) According to Valmiki a king without spies, fund and ethics becomes a common man. With the help of spies a king looks for reaching things and so be becomes far-seeing and prudent. (4) In the books of Indian politics the Kings were accepted

as *caracaksusa* or one who looks with the eyes of his spies. According to the Mahabharata a king sees inhabitants of his state through his spies—"*pure janapade caiva jnataryan caracuksha* and (5) "*caranetra prajaveksi*" (6) A real king does his duty after knowing the facts from his spies—"*caraih suviditam krutva tatah karma prayolayet* (7) and "*gurtaiscarair anumataih prthivim anusarayet.*

Requisites of a spy

According to the Mahabharata a king can employ his spies after inspecting their integrity. (9) One who is a non-believer can't be a spy '*nabhaktam carayeccaram*' (10) A man who looks like a fool, blind, deaf or dump may be employed as a spy by the king himself, but he should be very wise by his nature. One who can bear hunger and thirst and who is vigourous by his health can be employed as a spy. (11) He must be expert in doing good to his king. (12) The Mahabharata refers that spies in the shape of hypocrite, saint etc., will be deputed in the other states.(13) Later works of Indian political science, like Kamandaks's Nitisara and Sukraniti characterise the spies in detail. Kamandaka says—"To be aspointed as a spy, one must be well-versed in reasoning, signs and symbols, have a good memory, soft tongue, able to understand a thing without much effort, stoic and wise." (14) Sukracharya suggests that "only those persons should be appointed as spy who, for knowing the practices of the enemy and people, gathers information about them objcctively and conveys them correctly to the king. " (15)

Types of spies and their places of duty

In the age of the Mahabharata there were two types of

spies, one was called Bahischara, i. e. one who was deputed in the other country. (16) and the other was perhaps Antaschara or who was deputed in one's own country. The Mahabharata refers that the spies were deputed in all the common places of one's own state and in the states of other kings, such as markets, wanderings, the clusters of hermits, solaces, gardens, assemblage of learned persons, meetings, liquor-houses, stands for providing drinking water to travellors, sacred places etc. (17)

The spies must be employed on ministers, friends, sons of kings, feudatory princes etc. (18) Apprehending the leakage of secrecy, spies were to be deputed against the ministers and the sons of Kings. (19) The Mahabharata suggests that spies should be employed not only on the enemies but also on the friends and indifferents. (20)

The Mahabharata does not furnish details about the types of spies. We find only hypocrites, saints, fools, blinds, deafs and dumps a ss pies. (21) but in the later works of Indian political science we find the types of spies in detail. Kautilya in his Arthasastra primarily refers to two types of spies—one is called Sthayi or one who lives in only one place and the other is called Bhramanasila or Sanchara or one who wanders from one place to the other. (22) Again he divides first type of spy into five catagories and the second in the four catagories. (23) The types of spies of the Mahabharata are progrosis of the types of spies of Kautilya's Arthasastra.

In the age of the Mahabharata the spies of a particular King do not know each other. (24) but in the time of Kautilya some spies are known to one another, while others are not.

Functions of spies

In the age of the Mahabharata the spies who were deputed in their own country were always employed to know the movements of the inhabitants of their country. They were also engaged in detecting unreligious persons, crooks, thieves etc. Their main function was to know the enemies, indifferents and friends of the king. They were always to keep watch on the government servants of the state. (25) They had to know the habits of their citizens and the inhabitants of the country side. (26) The Kings knew the feelings of their people by their spies. (27) A king becomes just like sun due to his spies and then he does his duties by his wisdom. (28)

The foremost duty of the spies was to collect information about the military strength of the enemies. (29) It was their duty to find out the spies of other kings, who were living in their own state. (30) A king whose spies and secret consultations remain secret from the enemies is worthy of a state. (31) From the Udyogaparva of the Mahabharata we know that king Duryodhana had ordered his employees to check all persons including the businessmen and prostitutes, who were coming from other states, as it was a common practice of the spies to enter other sta te n the guise of businessman or prostitutes.

The spies of a state had to acquaint themselves with the geographical conditions of other states and help the army in its march to other states. For gathering information in the enemy states,the job of spies was very risky. In the age of the Mahabharata an ambassador or official messenger had got certain diplomatic immunities and could not be killed, but the spies always ran the risk and were liable to death

penalty. (32) During war the functions of spies became even more important. At that time they were not only to give information about the enemies, but had to work for penetrating the enemy camp. For this type of action they used to give poison and drugs to the persons of enemy camp. (33) According to the Mahabharata spies had to inspect and to look after the eighteen tirthas of the enemies. (34) The Ramayana also accepts this view and advises the king to know the eighteen tirthas of enemies and fifteen tirthas of his own by three different spies. (35)

Spying in Practice in the Mahabharata

In Mahabharata we find some instances of espionage. Suka and Sarana, the spies of Ravana, were caught by the army of Rama. (36) Jayadratha heard the promises of Arjuna through his spies. (37) The spies of Vidura conveyed the evil intention of the unholy Purocana. (38) Bhisma had employed spies to know day to day workings of princess Amba. (39) During the Pandavas incognito residence Duryodhana employed his spies to locate the Pandavas, (40) Yudhisthira had also employed his spies to know the secret consultations of the Kauravas during the Mahabharata war. (41)

Our discussion of spyism in the age of the Mahabharata clearly brings out that spying was accorded a place of prominence in ancient Indian politics and diplomacy. Spying was to be resorted to for the three fold purposes of knowing the minds of one's own people, the people and activities of the enemy and other states and to sow seeds of dissension and discord within the enemy rank. When we look at the practices and uses of espionage today we simply marvel how wise and far-sighted our forefathers had been ?

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KANIKANITI : A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Raghunath Panda

INTRODUCTION

Mahabharata (*Mbh.*) is a store house of knowledge of ancient Indian culture and tradition regarding which it has been aptly sade in its introduction.

arthasastramidam proktam dharmasastramidam mahat/
kamasastramidam proktam vyasenamitabuddhina//2

" This is the best manual of practical life, a sacred manual of morals and manual of the sensual gratification and Vyasa of boundless wisdom has recited it ".

Manu, who is sade to be the first law-giver of the world envisages for protection of *Dharma* at any cost whether in favourable or unfavourable conditions.

anistam capyanistesv tam dharmam na vicalayet/
(*MS*.VII)

He further emphasises, to save the society from fear and protection of *Varnasrama* order the kingship has been created by almight.y 3

A great manual of practical life the *Mbh.* as such can hardly avoid a serious subject like this. Hence *rajadharma* or the duties of the king has been given much emphasis in

the great epic. It is then no wonder that a complete sub-parvan of the twelfth book of the *Mbh.* has been specially devoted to *rajadharma,* Apart from this specific section the duties of a king at various junctures of performing his duties has been analysed at various relevant places. The analysis bear further interest because of the importance of the epic being a record of the political intrigue of famous historical Kuru and Pancala races of ancient India.

Purpose

The paper intends to analyse the advice of Kanika, the foremost of the ministers of Sakuni (an ally of the Kauravas) to Dhrtarastra when the later asks for his aid to overcome the mighty Pandavas. These shrewd lines of advice is popularly called as *Kanikaniti.* Attempts have been made here that, whether the henous way advised by Kanika are permitted by the other manuals of state-craft or not. The views are put here in the limited scope with special reference to the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya.

Background

Under the guidance of the versatile teacher Drona the Pandavas attained proficiency in archery. Bhima was further trained in the thicks of using the mace from Balarama. After their education and training in the lore of the Kstriyas, the Pandavas in their expedition defeated the powerful rulers of all the quarters to which their father, the mighty Pandu even failed to do. Bhima and Arjuna further filled the treasury of the Kurus with the heavy booty that have collected. The filmness, fortitude, patience, benevolence and unsweverving honesty of Yudhistira further made a respectable place for

him in the hearts of the subjects. Duryodhan became jealous of the wide popularity of the Pandavas among the subjects. He further apprehended loss of the kingdom and subordination to the Pandavas even for the maintenance of daily livelihood. Further being guided by the evil counsellors like Karna and Sakuni pressed Dhrtarastra to vanish and kill the Pandavas by some petext and win over the subjects by gitts and honour.

At this mental crisis Dhrtarastra having summoned Kanika takes his advice.

Summary

Kanika an adept personality seasoned in the lore of politics with due apology to the king started—

"Kings should be ever ready with all alartness ever increasing their prowess. Carefully avoiding all faults of themselves should watch the fault of their foes and take advantage of them. If the king is always ready to strike, everybody fareth him. Therefore the king should ever have chastisement in all he doeth. He should so conduct himself that his foe may not detect any weak side in him. But by means of the weakness detecteth in his foe he should persue him (to destruction). He should always conceal, like the tortoise concealing its body, his means and ends and he should always back his own weakness from the sight of others and having begun a particular act, he should ever accomplish it thoroughly Behold a thorn, if not extracted wholly, produceth a festering sore. The slaughter of a foe who doeth the evil is always praiseworthy. If the foe be one of great prowess, one should always watch for the hour of his disaster and then kill him without any scruples. If he

should happen to be a great warrior his hour of dissaster also should be watched and he should then be induced to fly. He further told that, "an enemy should never be scorned, however contemptible. A spark of fire is capable of consuming an extensive forest if can it only spread from one object to another in proximity. Kings should sometimes feign blindness and deafness, for the impotent to chastise. They should pretend not to notice the faults that call for chastisement. On occasions, such as these let them regard their bows as made of straw. But they should be always on the alert like a herd of deer sleeping in the woods. When the foe is in thy power destroy him by every means open or secret. Do not show him any mercy. although he seeketh thy protection. A foe or one that hath once injured thee, should be destroyed by lavishing money, if necessary by killing thou mayest at thy ease. The dead can never inspire fear. Thou must destroy the three five and seven (resources) of thy foes. Thou must destroy thy foes root and branch. Then should thou; destroy their allies and partisans. Carefully concealing thy own meens and ends thou should always watch thy foes, always seeking their flaws. Thou shouldst O King, rule thy kingdom always anxiously watching thy foes. By maintaining the perpetual fire by sacrifices, by brown clothes, by matted locks, and by hides of animals for thy bedding, shouldst thou at first gain the confidence of thy foes, and when thou gained it thou shouldst then spring upon them like a wolf. Bear thy foe upon thy shoulders till the time cometh when thou canst throw him down, breaking him into pieces like the earthern pot thrown down with violence upon a stony surface. The foe must never be left off even though he addresseth thee most piteously. No pity should thou show him but slay him at once. By the conciliation or the expenditure of money should the foe be slain. By creating disunion amongst

his allies or by employment of foree, indeed by every means in thy powar shouldst thou destroy the foe."

Again to the doubts of Dhrtarastra how the theories could be implemented, Kanika puts forward a story of a cunning jackal how through the device of disintegration by displaying sere wit at proper moments could achieve his goal of relishing the whole body of flesh of a fat deer. At the close of the narrative he further advises the king to use tha means of fire, poison, disintegration among the allies and the brothers themselves and other treaherous means in order to achieve the overlordship of the Kuru race.

Analysis

Even though Dhrtarastra had the desire to get his sons occupy the throne of Hastina still he was not devoid of the conscience as a guardian of the Pandavas. After listening the advise of Kanika, Dhrtarastra is found to be in a dual state of mind. He fails to decide immediately and becomes remoseful.

He considers Pandu to be beneficial and dear to him. The Pandavas are righteous like their father and desired by the subjects. The army personnel and the courtiers were being maintained by Pandu and they seem to him in every likelihood to support the Pandavas. Since they had been treated quite well by Pandu if he behaves harshly to the Pandavas may kill all of them with kith and kin or throw away out of the state.

But, Duryodhana and his counsellors pressed the king hard to send the Pandavas in exile. The critical edition maintains those chapters. Kanika's advice strengthens the proposals of Duryodhana and to a great extent shaped the

mental bearing of the king thou he was upset at the beginning. Kaiika before introducing his suggestions the poet describes him as a *mantranjna* (the knower of counselling) well-versed in science of politics and chief or foremost among the ministers. Hence Kauika beyond doubt possesses the parts and personality to be consulted over such a intrigue.

Now how far these rules of advice of Kanika is attested by the scriptures on science of politics is the subject of contention.

The Arthasastra

The *Arthasastra* warns the king sufficiently to be careful for the indisciplined princes and elaborate alternative methods to overcome them had been suggested. It has been envisaged that, "A king protects the kingdom (only) when (he is himself) protected from persons near him and enemies."

Here Dhrtarastra an uncle and guardian of the Pandavas treats them not fully by fillial sentiments though he had certain limited soft corner for them. He wants to be just to the sons of Pandu at the same time he wants his own son Duryodhan to be the king. Had Duryodhan been older than Yudhistira, the problem might not have arisen. If Pandu would have been alive the issue might have been the same as above. But, since Bhisma obstains from kingship, Dhrtarastra himself disabled and Pandu is dead, the throne automatically falls in the share of the eldest prince Yudhistira. This causes a stir in the Kaurava's camp. Now, both the views and means required to win over an enemy and kinsmen are applied on the Pandavas by Duryodhana and his

men to which the old king has to succumb and orders the Pandavas to proceed to Varanavata under the pretext of watching the grand festival hold in honour of Siva.

Now Kanikas advises lay sharp ways and means for doing away with the enemies of a king.

The *Arthasastra* had its sanctions to destroy the enemy almost in parallel ways even through deceitful and treacherous means.

The two fold view of the *Arthasastra* has not been followed rather the politics of self interest has been atressed by Kanika. Thus the goal of self interest is to be achieved dy *santvadibhirupayaih* or through the means of passification is found by sending the Pandavas purposefully to Varanavata. They are again assured to return to Hastinapura after sometime having spent their lives like divine beings in the midst of pleasure and plenty at Varanavata.

Not only by such actions Duryodhan is further inclined to create disintegration among the Pandava brothers and their allies like Drupada. As per this part of the intention Kanika's example of the jackal story is noteworthy. The system has in many places been advocated by the *Arthasastra* to create disintegration in the enemy's camp. By the device Kanika destroys the feeble thread of affection of Dhrtarastra on the Pandavas.

Conclusion

Hence the chapter had a vital contribution in shaping the future proceedings of the epic story. The theory advocate by Kanika were not only attested by the *Arthasastra* other ancient treatises like *Manusmrti* and *Kamandakiya Nitisara* also had similar recommendations on such similar situations. *Virabhogya Vasundhara* was the go of the kingship. The means was distinctly looked away from righteousness. However, politics based on righteousness had a dignified place of its own which deserves fresh attentions in a different scope.

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THE CONCEPT OF DHARMA AS RELATED IN THE BRAHMANA-VYADHA SAMVADA OF THE MAHABHARATA

Dr. U. N. Dhal

The Mahabharata, " the great narrative of the battle of the Bharatas" deals with the family feud in the royal house of the Kauravas leading to a truly intencine struggle in which the ancient race of the Kurus and Bharatas is almost entirely ruined. The urkern of the story was believed to ;have been limited to 8800 verses and was called *Jaya*. Due to subsequent reduction, revision, addition, it took the present form, 'Mahabharata', where the number of verses increases to one lakh only. Aa a result we come across numerous didactic tales aimed at preaching the philosophy and morality to the manking. Of the didactic legends the Dharma Vyadha story (also known as *Brahmana-Vyadha*) is included. The pivot of the story is a hunter (*Vyadha*) by birth and profession and is used to such cruel act of killing animals for his livelihood. But it is surprising that the tenets of eternal Dharma has been illustrated through his life and precept before a Brahmin ascetic. In view of this the story is accepted to examine the idea of Dharma enunciated therein.

The legend ot Dharma Vyadha (*Mbh*. 3, 198-206) is incorporated in the Markandeya samasyaparva of the Aranyakparvan Mahabharata. The Dharma Vyadha upakhyana has wider

scope and includes *the* Pativratopakhyana (*Mbh.* 3.196-197), it is also taken up for study. In order to have a clear insight in to the problem the story is put in a nutshell.

The Pativratopakhyana, which aims at illustrating the ideal virtue of woman (*stridharma*) runs thus :

A Brahmin Kausika by name was well-versed in the Vedas and become an ascetic leaving his home and hearth. Once while reciting Veda under the foot of a female crane befouled his body. When out of anger he cast his glance upon the crane, she feel down dead. Kausika was moved by pity and began to lament for his misdeed. Thereupon he entered in to a village and approached a house to beg for alms. While the housewife was preparing to give alms her husband entered the house hungry and exhausted. Disregarding the Brahmin the housewife went on attending on her with proper food and service. After serving her husband when she reached the Brahmin with alms, she found him blazed with anger. She tried to conciliate him by explaining her real problem. Division to one's husband (*Bhrtrsusrusa*) is regarded to be the supreme duty (*Dharma*) of the wife. She realises it very well and works up to that ideal, as a result she could attain divine knowledge. This insight helps her to know the Brahmin and his past. When she disclosed how he had burnt the crane with his wrath the ascetic was simply surprised at this and was convinced of her great achievement due to her service to her husband. When he wanted to know further she advised him to approach the Dharma Vyadha of Mithila for this (*Mbh.* 3. 197)

Kausika met that dutiful hunter in Mithila while he was engaged in selling venison and buffalo's meat in a butcher's yard. Through his in insight the hunter could know

him and welcomed to his residence. Surprised to find that the person was acclaimed to have been the most virtuous man even though he followed such a dishonourable profession the ascetic wanted to know the discrepancy between his Karma and the wisdom he possessed.

As to his personal history the hunter said that he was born in a Sudra family. So the duty (*Dharma*) followed by his sires and grandsires was accepted by him. He spoke truth, practised self-control, never envied anyone and used to make gifts according to his capacity, He carefully devoted his time to the service of his superiors and elders *guru vrddhav susrvsa*). He subsisted upon whatever was left after spending on gods, guests and dependents. Though accepted the profession of selling pork and buffalo meat, he never did slay the animals for the purpose, and even did not eat meat at all. Fasting during the day, he used to accept a meal at night. A person of low lineage may be a man of good character and turn out virtuous even if he be a slayer of animal by birth and profession Thus virtue does not entirely depend either on birth or on the occupation.

In course of his deliberation the hunter went on stating the duty of the four orders viz., Brahmin, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. Accordingly a Brahmin is enjoined to practise *Brahmacarya*, *Tapas*, recitation of Mantra and truthfulness. While adopting to fighting the Ksatriya has been assigned the duty of ruling over others in a righteous manner A Vaisya has been ordained to accept agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade. Above all service the above orders is the principal duty of the Sudra. Thus the *Svadharma* or *Varnadharma* is to be accepted by the person concerned.

Dharma, according to holy men is differentiated in three ways :

1) *dharma* inculcated in the Vedas,

2) the other found in the Dharma sastra and

3) the virtuous conduct of good men-*sistacirnasca sistanam* (*Mbh.* 3-198-78). The last one has wider scope. Broadly it includes acquisition of knowledge, pilgrimage to sacred places, forbearance, truthfulness, purity and straightforwardness—

Paranam capi vidyanam tirthanam avagahanam|
Ksama saty arjuvam savcam sistacaranidarsanam||

(*Mbh.* 3.198.79)

The manners (*acara*) are common to all four varnas. Kindness to one's friend and foe alike,firmness in virtue *dharma-nityata*), due regard to all creatures, subjugation of lust, wrath. pride avarice, devotion to one's superiors etc. When one is able to bring about harmony between one's thought and action abided by one's conscience, he is accepted to be virtuous and his conduct is deemed to be ideal in the society. Purity of conduct is the characteristic of all good-men.

As regards *Asrama-dharma* in general and *Grhastha-dharma* in particular he lays emphasis on devotion to one's Gurus and goes on dilating on it. Accordingly he divides them (Gurus) into five categories. They are father, mother, sacred fire, the soul and the spiritual preceptor.

Pancaiva guravo brahman purusasya vibhusatah|
Pita matagnir atma ca gvrus ca dvijasrttamah||

(*Mbh.* 3.204.26)

He impressed upon the Brahmin ascetic that due to his (hunters devotion to the above five Gurus in general and his parents in particular, his inner vision was extended (*pravrtto caksvr jato*) and so also was the case with that dutiful housewife.

The reason of his birth in a low family and acceptance of such an ignoble profession is summed up in the word karma. Destiny is all powerful and it is difficult to overcome the consequence of one's past deeds. He had to accept such a karma evil due to his sins in a former life. Whatever is killed is also killed by its own karma the killer being only an agent in consequence of his karma. Though each one of us is under the influence of one's karma, one must always try to see in what way one can atone for one's past karma and extricate himself from an evil doom ahead. There are various ways to expiate it viz., by gifts, truthfulness, service to Guru, faithfully following Varnadharma in which one is born, virtuous conduct, freedom from pride etc. Though many things can be said from both the sides, but one who sticks to the Dharma of his own Varna, surely acquires great glory *svakarmaniruto yo he sa yasah prapnuvyan mahat* (*Mbh.* 3. 199. 4).

Lastly the pious hunter advised the ascetic to go back to his parents, who were neglected by him altogether. Consequent upon his desertion, his parents became blind. Even though the Brahmin ascetic was well-versed in the Vedas, he could achieve nothing due to utter negligence of his parents and his Grhastha dharma as well.

The ascetic was well-convinced about the Varna dharma and Sistacara ahd began to praise Dharma Vyadha for his merits. According to the ascetic, a Brahmin, who is vain,

and haughty, addicted to vices and wadded to evil and degrading practices, is no better than a Sudra :

Brahmanah pataniyesu vartamano vikarmasv|
dambhiko duskrtaprayah sudrena sadrso bhavet||
(*Mbh.* 3.206.11)

On the otherhand endued with such virtues like righteousness selfrestraint and truthfulness a Sudra is very well considered as a Brahmin.

yastu svdra dame satye dharma ca satatotthitah|
tam brahmanam aham marye vrttena hi bhaved dvjah||
(*Mbh.* 3.206.12)

A person becomes a Brahmin by his own good deeds, but by his own evil karma he attains an evil and terrible doom. Thus saying Kausika proceeded to his abode to look after his old parents and began to follow the moral instructions imparted by Dharma Vyadhs.

Importance of the Myth

Ordinarily a man consciously and deliberately pursues for certain aims of life. They are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa and called Purusarthas. The first and foremost among them is Dharma, which refers to the religio-ethical ideal and may be translated as 'virtue'. The term has wider connotation and is used in diverse ways. It is derived from the root *dhr* meaning to sustain,uphold, hold together etc. (2)Broadly speaking it comprises precepts which aim at securing the material and spiritual sustenance and growth of the individual and the society. In spite of the comprehensive character of Dharma it is limited to two principal ideas : firstly, the organization of social life through well-defined and well-

regulated classes (Varnas), secondly, the organization of an individual's life within those classes (Asrama). Thus the Varnasramadharma includes ordained duties (Dharma) of the four classes along with four stages of life.

The story under discussion seeks to illustrate the concept of Varnasrama-vyavastha. In the scheme of the Varna organization, the problem is considered from the point of view of the larger group and the individual's position is defined in the group with reference to his innate nature (*guna*), his tendencies and dispositions. While in case of Asrama, the problem is approached from the point of the training or nurture (*Srama*) of the individual through specially provided environments at different stages of life, and in the Varna organization (*Varna Vyavastha*) the problem is considered from the point of view of the larger group and the individual's position is defined in it with reference to his innate nature (*guna*), his tendencies and dispositions. In the present myth the ideal Dharma of the four orders is started in brief. Basically as a member of the society one is expected to adopt to the profession of one's family or Varna. If each individual accepts the duty of his order (*Svadharma*), peace amity and harmony would prevail in the society and one would get ample apportunity to rise up to achieve one's goal smoothly.

The dutiful hunter illustrates his own life as an example. Following the profession of his parents scrupulously he accepts the selling or killing of animals for his livelihood dispassionately. Thus doing one's own duty (*NiyataKarma*) properly in accordance with one's own Dharma even if it needs killing, is also an effective way of attaining salvation. The same idea is reflected in the Bhagavad Gita, 3 (2.31) where it is said that one should not falter from one's duty

(*Svadharma*) which qualifies one to attain liberation. And to abandon one's duty is *Adharma*, which leads to bondage.

Besides aiding the social upliftment one has to look to the prosperity of the individual. It is dependent on the principles laid down in the Veda, Dharmasastra and the virtuous conduct (*sistacara*) of good men common to all human beings alike. Besides the minutest detail of conduct (*acara*) of the virtuous, the wise hunter puts them in brief such as truthfulness, self restraint and duty, but he lays more emphasis on the devotion to one's parents and superiors in case of householder and for the housewife devotion towards her husband. It is believed that the devotion of the housewife towards her husband inculcates similar conviction in the mind of her children. These are deemed essential for a householder. Thus, he lays more emphasis on Grhastha-srama, which is regarded as the pivot all Asramas.

Another significant problem is posited here, whether a person qualifies to be a Brahmin due to his birth in a particular family or due to his conduct. Here Kausika, a Brahmin of high attainments finds that he has not realised the full implications of Dharma. So he is directed to approach a hunter, a man of lowest order, in order to learn the way of Dharma. Because of scrupulous adherance to his duties, the hunter is fully cognizant of the mystery of Dharma. As a result he is accepted by the learned Kausika as a Brahmin. This also creates the impression that the revolt against the rigid caste system was then very much clear.

It will not be out of place to cite another example from the Mahabharata (3. 873-278) to corroborate the same. The king Yudhistira, who is also known as Dharmaraja has expressed similar view in the episode of Ajagara (Python), As desired by the Python, Yudhisthira begins to define a

Brahmin thus ; He in whom are noticeable truthfulness' charity, forgiveness, good character, mercy, ascetic tendencies and compassion, is regarded as a Brahmin. It is also accepted by the authorities that one in whom the characteristic made of life of a Brahmin is seen, is a Brahmin and one in whom it is not found, should be assigned to Sudra Varna eventhough he is born in such a family :

Satyam danam ksama silam anrsamsyam damo ghrna
drsyante yatra nagendra sa brahmana iti smrtah

(*Mbh.* 3.177.16)

X X X

Sudre caitad bhavel laksyam dvije tacca na vidyate |
na vai sudro bhavec chudro brahmano na ca brahmanah ||

(*Mbh.* 3.177.20)

If this is the case, argus the Python, the distinction ot caste is useless so long as a man's activity does not correspond to the mode of life of his Varna. Yudhisthira replies— In his opinion it is very difficult to ascertain the Varna of a man owing to the confusion all Varnas *(Varnasamkara)*. Men of all Varnas are begetting children of women of all Varnas. A Sudra is not a Sudra by birth alone nor a Brahmin is a Brahmin by birth, but they are known so for their conduct alone—

tasmac chilam pradhanestam vidur ye tattvadarsinah ||

(*Mbh.* 3.177.28b)

In whatever family one may be born, one is considered as a Sudra as long as one is not initiated in the Vedas. Whosoever conforms to the rules of pure and virtuous conduct, he is accepted as a Brahmin : 4

vrttya sudrasamo hy esa yavad vede na jayate | 30.a

X X X

yatredanim mahasarpa samskrtam vrttam isyate |
tam brahmanam aham purvam uktavan bhujagottam || 32
(*Mbh.* 3.177.30a : 32)

That one becomes a Brahmin by Karma not by birth is clearly illustrated in the life of Satyakamajabala 5 and the same idea is corroborated by Buddha in his sermons. 6

In the present state of society where Varnasramadharma is set at naught, In whatever position one may be placed, if behaves to do one's duty in a spirit of devotion and dedication, Thus observing one's duty or Dharma and following the virtuous conduct would bring prosperity and happiness to the doer, peace, security and amity to the society at large.

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   vedabhyasad bhaved bipra brahmam janati brahmanah ||
5. *Chandogyopanisat*. A. S. S. No. 106, Poona 1982, Ch. 4. 4.
6. *Na jatahi na gottehi na jacca hohi brahmano* |
   yahmi saccam ca dhammo ca so svci so ca brahmana ||393
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ARCHAEOLOGY OF MAHABHARATA SITES IN INDIA AND PROBABLE EVIDENCE FROM ORISSA

R. N. Dash

India was known to its people and outsiders from remote past for the epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. The people of India accepted their stories as matters of reality and ardently believed in their authenticity. But questions were raised by the western scholars and outsiders on the validity of these epics. Most of foreign scholars believed them to be myths and the poetic estacies of the authors. This acusation wounded the feeling of most of the Indians and particularly the religious and saintly persons in India. They become intolerant about it and counter arguments were posed and counteracted from both the sides. In the long run archaelogists of India entered the field to examine and testify, if possible, the authenticity of these epics. As such, H. D. Sankalia, B. B. Lal, S. R. Rao and others worked on the sites found mention in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Since we are to discuss the evidences in support of the Mahabharata from archaeological context the discussion of the Ramayanic sites, etc. are deliberately left off in this paper.

According to Sankalia it is the common men's belief that Mahabharata was a fact and about 5000 years ago from the present era the war was waged. One Dr. P. V. Vartak has dated the beginning of the Mahabharata war to the 16th October, 5561 B. C. by the modern astro-mathematical calculations. It was thought by the archaeologists to see whether the fact can be borne out by evidences from under

the earth. The other dates suggested by scholars for the Mahabharata war are 3102 (P. C. Sengupta), Circa 1424 (K. P. Jayaswal), Circa 1400 (A. S. Altekar), 1152 (S. N. Pradhan, and 9th century B. C. (H. C. Raychoudhuri). Lal after considering most of the dates places Mahabharata war between 1100-800 B. C.

The approach of the scholars to the antiquity of Mahabharata assumed different dimensions and directions. It was in the beginning confined to the text of the common recemsions. The Original text was enlarged by post-scripts added to the earlier text. As such, attempts were made at the first instance to bring out a critical study of the Mahabharata. Several institutions and groups at various regional centres have been working on the subject. In many cases, taking into consideration the regional recensions there is every probability of incorpotating facts belonging to these regions which might have surreptiously made in-roads to the emotionally compiled critical editions. This is because the original text of the Mahabharata has found many-fold copying ever since its appearance. Thus the interpolations in the same need elaborate debate and discussion before their inclusion or exclusion. Once the critical edition is brought out the towns and cities found mention in the same are to be located and taken up for excavation. This is in order to ascertain the authenticity of the epic. In India one gets several spots in different states which identify itself as the resort of Virata and Pandavas.One has to findout the actual one associated with it.

It is held by Lal that at one stage Mahabharata was called Jaya and had 8,800 verses. When it came to be known as 'Bharata' in contained 24,000 verses. But today it is called 'Mahabharat' with 100,000 verses. It is believed

by scholars that this form of the Mahabharata has been reached during the 4th century A. D., i. e., after the Guptas came into prominence.

The second line of approach is from the study of monuments and sculptures. The Mahabharata as a popular epic has given rise to the fashioning of sculptural panels on the monuments. The earliest monuments containing them and their concentration should be noted alongwith their time period to identify the existence of the epic in its earliest form of representation through sculptures. The Jatakas, Jaina literatures and the Puranas also contain veiled references of the Mahabharata which are to be taken into account.

Similarly the earliest inscriptional sources are to be taken into account, In India hundreds of inscriptions in the temple walls rocks, copper plate grants metal images, etc. have been discovered. The epic or the epic heroes of the Mahabharata have been invocated in the same or found mention in some manner or other. This also fixes the earliest limit of the written evidence to the Mahabharata personages and the epic as a whole. From that time one should go to the still earlier stage where the earliest form of the Mahabharata existed. It is held that if Krishna was a historical figure he would have lived definitely earlier than Buddha. It has gone for certain that Krishna never played his part after Buddha because the history of the latter is known in clear terms. Hence Krishna must be placed prior to 6th century B. C. The question aries how early he should be playing his part.

Lastly the important factor is the excavation of located sites mentioned in the Mahabharata. The cultural relics found from the excavations were variously dated. The similarity of culture sequence in the majority of the located

sites could only reveal a cultural horizon. With the recognizable relics of the later period the journey can be undertaken to the unknown strata of the Mahabharata age under lying the same. In this process the factors responsible for the descriptions in the critical edition of the Mahabharata may be recognised in the exposed relics of the unrecognised strata in order to equate the same with the period of the Mahabharata. Since Mahabharata is a huge literary work shrouded with fanciful poetical presentations it is difficult to find out the actual relics of that period.

With this stated background archaeologists have tried to bring out the positive proof of the Mahabharata war or relevant archaeological records of the time. As such an area extending from "Punjab in the north to Ujjain in the south and Bahawalpur in the west" (on north Rajasthan and Sind border) to Bihar in the east that is covering the indo-gangetic plains, the Vedic and Upanishadic Aryavarta and Brahmarshidesa" was choosen to be excavated and ascertain the probable cultural relics of the period B. B. Lal exposed Hastinapura, the seat of the Kauravas, found mention in the epic 'Mahabharata'. Further, he examined other mentioned sites of the Mahabharata and exposed some of them. As many as 30 sites that had found mention in the Mahabharata was located. These sites are Ahichchhatra, Amin, Baghrela, Baghpat, Bahadurgarh, Baijnathpur, Barnawa, Bisrakha,Bairat, Chak, Chandpur, Charan, Chhajja, Chhat, Dhankot, Dotheri, Dugri, Ghanauli, Hastinapura,Indrapat, Kampit, Kotta Nihang Kurukshetra, Mathura, Nagar, Palwal, Panipat, Pehowa, Raja Karan ka Qila, Rupar, Saini, Teora and Tilpat, Similarly S. R. Rao excavated Dwaraka, the second seat of the Yadavas located at Gujarat which goes by the same name even

today. Besides, many other sites found mention in Mahabharata have not yet been located. Prof. Nautial of the Gharwal University excavated Thapali on the right bank of Alakananda river near Srinagar and has claimed to have unearthed evidences of Pandavas sojourn in the Himalayas after the battle of Kurukshetra.

The story of the Mahabharata in a nut-shell has been presented by Lal as follows : 'There ruled at Hastinapura (a place even now known by the same name in the Meerut District of Uttar Pradesh), a king called Dhritarastra who had a brother named Pandu. Their sons were known respectively as the Kauravas and Pandavas who, as might be expected, were not amicably disposed towards one another. Thus, with a view to avoiding a possible conflict, Dhritarastra divided the kingdom into two parts, giving Hastinapura and the surrounding territories to his sons, and Indraprastha (a part of Modern Delhi on which stands Purana Qila) and its neighbourhood to the Pandavas. This, however, did not have the desired effect, and the Kauravas made an attempt to burn alive the Pandavas in a lac house at a place called Varanavata, identified with Barnawa, in Meerut District, U.P. The Pandavas, however, managed to escape. During the course of their exile, they stayed at Viratanagara, modern Bairat in District Jaipur, Rajasthan. Towards the end of the exile, they threw out a feeler to the Kauravas that they (the Pandavas) should be given back at least five villages. The names of these villages very slightly in the different recensions of the Mahabharata, as also in the local tradition. However, these are generally taken to be Paniprastha (modern Panipat in Haryana), Sonaprastha (Sonepat in the same State), Vrikaprastha (Baghpat in U.P.), Indraprastha (Purana Qila in Delhi) and Tilaprastha (Tilpat in Haryana). The Kauravas refused to part with these five villages. (perhaps

they had good reason for not doing so, for had the Pandavas got these villages, they would have commanded the entire area to the west of the Yamuna. And since the Panchalas who, through a matrimonial alliance, were on the side of the Pandavas, already commanded the area to the east of the Ganga. The Kauravas would have found themselves completely sandwitched between the two). When the Kauravas did not give up these villages, a battle was fought at Kurukshetra (even now known by the same name, in Haryana), Krishna, who played a major role in the battle on the side of the Pandavas, hailed from Mathura in U. P.

However, systematic excavations were taken up in some sites like Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Kurukshetra and partial excavations in other mentioned sites by Lal. It has brought to light a ceramic at the lowest common habitation at these sites which is known as Painted Grey Ware Culture. First discovered and described by K. C. Panigrahi, Krishna Dev and Wheeler at Ahichchhatra this ceramic was recognised by Lal as the typical pottery type of Aryans belong to Mahabharata period. Further, it has been shown that this pottery is synchronous of the Aryan movement along the Ganga valley.

The culture which is represented along with this painted Grey were Culture has been attested by various excavator. The authors of this culture were living in mud-plastered reed houses. From the same it is known that the economy of the people was based on agriculture and cattle breeding. Besides, it was supplemented by fishina and hunting economy. Since the economy was rural it was quite plausible that Krishna was sent to the Kauravas to ask for five villages.

The Painted Grey Ware culture was iron using. In the tool variety are included spear-heads, arrow-heads, daggers, antler points, styluses or double pointed bone points which might have been used for weaving purposes also Iron ores and slags occur together in the upper levels. So it is conceived that some of these hearths are meant for something iron. Objects of copper include single items of arrow-head, antimony rod, nail-pairer and borer which has been unearthed from Hastinapura.

Animals like cattle, buffalo, sheep, pig, horse etc. were found to be domesticated and used as draft animals, The hunted animals also include deer. The domesticated horse seem to be associated with the sacrificial and other purposes as the Mahabharata has mentioned elaborately in the texts. It has been pointed out that the inhabitants ate rice (and perhaps Lentil), but supplemented it with beef, pork, mutton and venison and even horse's flesh. This is indicated by the occurrence of large quantitues of bones of these animals, which bear cut-marks and are also charred. In the top layers of Pd. II at Hastinapura the evidence of the use of horse occur.

The pottery is made of fine-grained and well-levigated clay, wheel-made and fired under reducing conditions turning it to grey. Bowls and dishes have fine ashy surfaces and paintings of simple strokes drawn on them. The shapes lack variety but all these 2500 years and more these two (thali and thala or bowl) have continued to form an essential feature in the Indian kitchen. Black and at times chocolate colour was used before firing. The designs include linear, curvilinear and geometric patterns like 'dots, dashes, oblique, horizontal or cross-lines, concentric circles or semi-circles, swastikas, sigmas, chains of short spirals, etc.

The types of pottery are dish, bowl and small vase which are absent in any previous cultural or civilized contexts. Their are two varieties of thali found in this culture. The first having straight sides which go out and the second have sides indented or have ledges and bear a punched decoration outside. Vessels having one or two corrugations outside were meant for storing and the ledges were probably meant for receiving a lid. A glance at these would show (even to a layman), that the Painted Grey Ware truely represents the ancestors of a form of life seen in the Hindus of North India, particularly the Gangetic valley. Its pottery is distinctive and include coarse red, bright red, fine black, grooved grey ware stem and the small feeding cup. Terracotta bull, horse and female figurines occur with ornaments, i. e. beads of various stones, glass bangles, etc. The residents wore ornaments like necklaces, pendants, ear-rings and bangles-made of semi-precious stones (chert, agate, jasper, carnelian) and bone' terracotta (discs, simple and decorated), cylindrical objects of chert and jasper, Spinning was done on one and two holed terracotta discs. Cooking was done on simple-one mouthed Chulah with horse-shoe like sides. It is also strange that so many hearths occur together.

Square sectioned oblong die of bone marked with 1, 2, 3 and 4 holes on the 4 sides and plano-convex painted gamesman indicating Chausar (Pasa) game occur in the PGW culture. This indicates the authenticity of the story of the Mahabharat that the Kauravas defeated the Pandavas in this game and forced them to go into the forest.

There is further evidence of a great flood in the Ganga which washed away Hastinapura. It corborates the Mahabharat story that at the time of Nichakshu, fifth in succession from Parikshit a great flood compelled the king to shift his capital to Kausambi. Archaeologically it is also

confirmed that the lower levels of Kausambi yielded a last phase of the PGW Culture.

As per the data it is calculated that among the rulers of Kausambi was Udayana. the 25th descendant from Parikshit. He was a contemporary of Buddha and outlived the Buddhist religious prophet. It is known that Buddha died either on 487 or 433 B. C. As such, Udayana might be rulling sometime about 500 B. C. Back calculating for the 25th rulers till Parikshit with an average 14 years for each ruler, as per Lal, one reaches 836 B. C., i. e. the approximate time of the ending of the Mahabharata war and the coronation of Parikshit.

The duration of this PGW ceramic has been calculated in between 1100-800 B. C. and the imprint of culture it has laid on the Indian soil continued till the present day through out northern India with minor modifications. All our epics and Puranas maintained that the Bharat War marked the end of the Dvapara Yuga and the beginning of the Kaliyuga. The PGW sites seem to represent the sides mentioned in the Mahabharata. But the Mahabharata sides identified by Lal contradicts the traditional view that the Aryans of the Mahabharata period lived about 3000 B. C. Sankalia has tried to compare the common method of producing the incised lines on the base of dishes at Hastinapura and on the bowls and similar coloured pottery with swastics painted on it from Sahi Tump in Baluchistan. The Sahi Tump pottery is different in shape, made for funerary purposes, very brittle in some cases, the designs go with the shape of the vessel and data earlier than .000 B. C. with Iranian affinities. But the PGW was meant for daily use in the house-hold, its fabric much finer. design limited in extent, dates around 1000 B. C. and essentially Indian in content. Can it be derived from the Sahi Tump pottery through some unknown

link yet to be discovered which could bridge the gap of the 1000 years separating the two ?

Lal concludes that there is a Kernel of truth at the base of this epic. Poetic exageration and litarary fancy have shrouded the historical facts to a great extent since it is a 'prabandha kavya'. Moreover, he has pointed out that Mahabharata was composed a few centuries earlier than the Christian era. As such, the then environment found around the composer made its way into the Mahabharata. Further, the relics indicate that the Mahabharata preceedes the Ramayana In this regard the textual evidence of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (III : 3 : 1) has been cited which supports the precedence of Mahabharata to that of Ramayana. In this way it coroborates the archaeological finding also,

Lal further discusses the erguments advanced by some people who are not satisfied with the material culture obtained from the Mahabharata sides. They argue that these are not the very sites referred to in the Mahabharata which relate to a long long past. In replying to their queries Lal has pointed out that there are no other sites going by the same names and fitting into the geographical details given in the text. So he concludes that one has to accept this hard fact against a wounded notion.

In recent years (1980) excavations at Dwaraka in Jamnagar district of Gujarata by Dr. S. R. Rao has unearthed a township of the Mahabharat times as early as 12th century B. C. Dr. Rao has shown that the archaeological evidence proves that the remains are different from the known Harappan sites existing in the district.

At Dwaraka eight settlements and five temples were found almost one above the other and the earliest of which goes back to the 15th Century B. C. and the latest to the

14th-15th Century A. D. According to Dr. Rao below the earliest temple lay evidence of two submerged townships.

According to Dr. Rao the earlier township was probably the ancient Kusasthali, on whose ruins Krishna said to have built Dwaraka that found mention in the Mahabharata. Large building blocks were found below sediments in the sea bed and clear outlines of two fortified walls were excavated. The importance of the Bahrainian influence on the seals is that it bridges the gap between Harappan civilization and the pre-Buddhist period.

According to Dr. S. R. Rao two moon stones (Chandra-sila) and four three holed anchors of the types found in Syria and Cyprus and used during 14th-17 Century B. C. were discoved from the off-shore excavation. Again from the submerged city of Dwaraka a late Indus type small rectangular seal made of conch shell with perforated button at the back. The survival of this seal at Bet Dwaraka probably used as an identity seal to the city, has found mention in the Harivamsa as a measure of safety following Salva's attack. The seal is assignable to 15th-16th century B. C. in view of the chert blades and late Harappan pottery. Similarly the occurrence of post-Harappan Lustrous Red Ware and the Chalcolithic black-and-red ware ceramics the antiquity of Dwaraka is pushed back to 14th-15th Century B. C. The other important occurrences are Olpin (narrow-mouthed bottle of pottery) with a loop handle, a mould of calcareous sandstone with three grooves for casting pointed spearheads of different sizes, shell bangles, gamesmen and beads. The excavation confirmed a coastal settlement by the sea about 3500 years ago.'

Among the discovery a lustorous red ware of the earlier township was found to be flourishing between 1600-1300 B. C, or more precisely 15th-14th B. C. At sites like Rangpur

Prabhas (Somanath), Rajdi and Vasal in Saurastra similar pottery types are to be found which is important. This pottery type is seen mixed with an other pottery type from the subsequent township of the early historic period dated around 1000 B. C. The layer composing this discovery is of sand and debris of the 1st millennium B. C. From the thick sand layer and broad pottery types it is ascertained that the township was destroyed by a tidal wave. Even sand and eroded pottery was met in the early layer which is being identified by Dr. Rao as the ancient capital of Lord Krishna. In conclusion Dr. Rao says that Dwaraka was probably occupied as early as 1500 B. C. the date of the Mahabharata war. Again, it is stated by Rao that the astronomical evidence of the war is 1424 B. C. To confirm this finding under-water exploration was taken up in 1983. "Two spots were chosen, one near the ancient temple of Samudranarayana, also called Varuna Devata, at the mouth of the Gomati, on a harbour. The other spot was chosen off the Bet Dwaraka island, 2 Kms. from the main land, on the basis of the description of Krishna's capital in the Mahabharata. Again prehistoric pottery were found at the two sites.

Dr. Rao excavated a port town at Bet Dwaraka Island on Gujarat coast (during 1984-5) in order to search for Krishna's capital. The excavation revealed structural remains of a late Harappan-cum-post-Harappan port town. The discoveries include building blocks of disturbed structures, associated with ware-rolled pottery of protohistoric period dating to 15th-14th century B. C. The blocks were lying between a massive stone wall, on the ware-cut bench of the inter-tidal zone and the rubble wall in the cliff section'. It is inferred that when the stone wall was built on the wave cut bench the sea level must have been 1 to 1.5 metres below the bench during mid second millennium B. C. The team of archaeolcgists from the National institute of Ocenography

guided by Rao excavated the possible connection of Bet Dwaraka with the main land relying on the hint thrown in the Mahabharata that Krishna told Arjuna that the sea will soon swallo up Dwaraka the land of the Yadava and Arjun rushed to evacu ate the city from the sea. The result of this submergence was that the connection between the main land and Bet Dwaraka was broken. The objective of this under water archaeology was "to see if the wall that was found on shore extended under water. It did but the wall has not yet been excavated.' Some trial trenches were dug on the sea bed. It was found that there had been two towns both sunk by the sea. The earlier one dated around 1500 B. C. and the later to around 1400 B. C. After searching under the sea bed, archaeologists are ready to support this account as historian truth.

The other discoveries of Bet Dwaraka include jars, bowls dishes, troughs and dish-on-stand in the red ware of late Harappan fabric and sherds of the lustrcus red ware bowl. Also included are copper-smiths stone moulds used for casting spearheads of different sizes, large quantities of conch-shell bangles, ladles and vessels in various stages of manufacture. This suggest a shell working industry that was flourishing during the period. From the trenches dug on the sea-bed yielded typical Indus-Bahrainian seals and also objects made of iron.

These fact finding discoveries have started identification of village and townships at various corners of the country flourishing during the time of Mahabharata. In this context the geographical situations of various places found mention in the Mahabharata relating to Orissa should be searched. Necessary and planned methods of identification of those places should be followed by regular excavations to prove the authenticity of the descriptions.

The descriptions of Kalinga, Odra and Utkal Kings are found in the Mahabharata. These kingdoms were separate entities at that time. Moreover, according to Santi Parva, Kalinga was a powerful principality. Its capital was a prestigious place to be attended on the occassion of the Swayambara of the Kalinga Princess. The powerful monarchs of the Mahabharata period took pride in the same. Thus the location of the capital of Kalinga and excavation at the site to ascertain the material culture of the period has become necessary. Then it can be ascertained whatever the culture of that period in Kalinga is one with the rest of India or differs from it and in what way ? In the past excavations were carried on at Sisupalagarh and Dhauli by the Archaeological Survey of India. The relics in its early stages included among other things a lustrous red ware associated with copper objects followed by an iron using culture. This fort town is being identified as Kalinganagar. This Kalinganagar or Sisupalgarh or Jaugarh can be identified as Rajapuri of the Kalinga monarch Chitrangada or the capital of Srutayudha of Kalinga. If Dwaraka excavation is any indication of this lustrous red ware then one cannot but be inclined to compare both the wares. If Dwaraka ware could be accepted ss the relic of the Mahabharata times then there is every possibility of equating the Sisupalgarh lustrous red ware to a similar period which has affinity with a similar ware comparable to Hastinapura and other Mahabharata sites found associated with the PGW. But one thing holds out clearly in this comparison, i,e. the pottery type associated with the Mahabharata period is PGW which is marked by its absence at Sisupalgarh and from the available reports from Dwaraka also. But the NBPW is found associated at a later phase of Sisupalgarh. According to Dr. D. P. Agrawal the NBP ware is contemporaneous to the PGW in a spatial context and its eastern occurrenae is early than the western spread. This ware is also found in red ware forms also and associated

with the lustrous Red ware or polished red ware which is found associated with PGW sites.

In the Bhisma Parva it has been mentioned that Bhima faced Srutayudha, the Kalinga monarch, with the help of Chedis. As per 'Adi Parva' of the Mahabharata Vasu Uparichara, the lord of Chedis, established his capital near the Suktimati river (1 : 63 : 29 and 34). The mountain Kolahala blocked the way of the river for which Uparichara pierced the mountain with a kick. Suktimati made its flow through that hole in the mountain. Chedis were the rulling races in Orissa during the Ist century B. C. and Kharavela made Tosali his capital. If the situation of Vasu's capital could be traced along a river of the name of Suktimati then it will not be difficult to locate the Kolahaia mountain. In this connection the 'Suktel' river may be taken into consideration and necessary investigation made along its banks for the extinct capital of Uparichara and the relics of the Mahabharata times.

Again the ceramic evidence from Sisupalgarh. Pd. IA yields three varieties of pottery, namely, 'brownish red, polished red and red wares. The brownish red ware type has an internally ledged rim probably to provide a lid on the Vase and it comes from an early level. Ledged rim is the characteristic in some of the PGW pottery. The polished red ware slipped in or outside it is found at the earlier levels. This can very well be compared with types of lustrous Red Ware from Dwaraka minus the knobbed designs.

The present Orissa comprise either the hole or a major portion of Kalinga, Utkala and Odra. These three kingdoms though found mention in the Mahabharata yet their extents were not known. However, Kalinga was the most notable of the three since Mahabharata has given more informations regarding this kingdom, Its rulers and the people. Such

references are met with in the Adi Parva Vana Parva, Śantiparva, Asvamedha Parva, etc. Moreover, it is held by tradition that Sisupala, who was slain by Krishna, was rulling in Sisupalgarh near Bhubaneswar. From Mahabharata it is also known that Rajapuri was the capital of Kalinga. The other things referred to by the epic are the Vaitarani river, Śuktimati river snd Kolahala mountain. The capital of Vasu Uparichara, the king of the Chedis, was lying on the banks of the Suktimati river. Thus some details regarding their location and references of their speciality has also been provided in the epic which could by examined by archaeological explorations and confirmed by excavations.

Now coming to the excavated sites at Sisupalgarh, Jaugarh and Dhauli one is inclined to search for the archaeological materials related to the Mahabharata. This can best be found in a way of comparison with the known and excavated sites of the Mahabharata, Indraprastha, Panchala and Dwaraka can be sites as the type sites with some soft of certainty. The identification of these sites have become possible by the archaeologists. Only Panchala has been identified at two sites namely Ahichhatra and Kampil. Besides these major sites, where excavations have been conducted and the culture unearthed at the base or early level, some pottery types have been recovered other than the PGW. The concern here is to find out the minor sites related to the Mahabharata on the basis of the discoveries of the major sites.

It has been admitted on all hands that PGW is associated with the Mahabharata sites. Further, the question arises, whether the PGW is the only ceramic found in that level associated with the Mahabharata sites ? Taking into consideration the ceramic recoveries at the type site Hastinapura this can be analysed. As per the report the earliest period at Hastinapura is marked by a ceramic believed to be of the

copper Hoard culture followed by the PGW in its next upper stratum. The PGW is found associated with dull-red ware mainly of coarser fabric, an essentially plain red slipped ware of finer fabric and a polished black ware.' Comparing these pottery types with the finds from Sisupalgarh it is found that a red ware from Hastinapura (No. VII, Fig. 11, P. 45, late level Pd. II) can be equated with two types from Sisupalgarh (Nos. 45 and 46 of pinkish buff ware and red ware respectively illustrated in Fig. 7, P. 83, from the middle level, Pd, IIB). The polished black ware from Hastinapura (Fig. 12, P. 48, No. XXXIII, early level, Pd. II) can be compared with a similar type from Sisupalgarh (Fig. 6, P. 81, No. 6, early level of Pd. I), Besides, a greyish black ware from Hastinapura (Fig. 9, P. 41, No. 48, Pd. II) can be compared to a similar type from Sisupalgarh (Fig. 6, P. 81, No. 21, Pd. IIA). Only the difference is that the Hastinapura pottery is painted in black inside whereas the Sisupalgarh type is devoid of the same. It may be mentioned here that though the technique of preparing in the grey ware has travelled from Hastinapura or similar sites of the Mahabharata period to this part of Orissa yet the skill of painting on the pottery has not been difused since it is a speciality of the potters to prepare the same as an unique feat of skil and pride. Similarly bright red ware examples from both the sites can be compared to bring about the similarity between the two ceramics from the early levels superimposed on copper associated ceramic of the lower level. The shapes of PGW and other ceramics from Ahichchhatra can also be compared with the Sisupalgarh ceramics of the early levels. Some of the ceramics from Saipai site is found in a slight modified form in the Sisupalgarh pottery types. One important point is that the knobbed ware types have a concentric ring round the knob. The Sisupalgarh pottery indicate that there are certain knobbed wares without this concentric ring or groove and in others it is variously depicted. When we

look to the PGW ceramic we find concentric rings painted inside some of these ceramics. Probably Sisupalgarh potters adopted this decoration from PGW culture in their own way and as such the concentric ring round the knob of Sisupalgarh pottery came into being.

If these propositions are accepted then the opinion of Lal that the fort constructed by king Sisupalgarh mentioned in the Mahabharata ... ...does not hold good ... ... needs revision. In this way it has posed some other problems, i.e. to find out the capital towns of Utkala, Odra and the probable Jajnasthali of Yudhisthira during his soujourn some where on the bank of the Vaitarani river. Similarly the archaeological evidence of these town capitals could well be compared with the other related places in northern India mentioned in the Mahabharata. It all depends on a planned project on the epic sites in Orissa.

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VANAPARVA OF VYASA AND SARALA— A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Hemant Kumar Das

Sarala Das, the poet-laurate of 15th century, authored the great epic Mahabharata in Oriya in his own way. He was a master story-teller, conceiving heroic and romantic stories, through which he desired to preach morality among the common mass of Orissa. These stories were quite different from the dry theories of the scriptures. He intended to completely destroy the monopoly of the so called intellectuals over the shastras, and place it in the Durbar of the common mass. For this purpose he cerefully studied the original Mahabharata, digested it and applying his own superb imaginative skill, created his Mahabharata. He changed the name of the Parvas, keeping intact the number. Thus the first Parva was divided into two parts, and the new part was named 'Madya Parva'. Vana Parva, hence, occupies the fourth place.

The subject matter of Vyasa's Vana Parva revolves round the exile of the Pandavas after the Dyutakrida. For this purpose, Vyasa has devoted 315 chapters whereas Sarala Das limited the entire narration within 47 chapters. In fact he utilised very little from the original script, discarded a lot and applied his own creative power to give the Parva a new shape. For example, Sarala Das, has described the meeting of Kauravas and Pandavas in the forest in the second chapter. Gandharva-Chitrasena has imprisoned the Kauravas, whose sole intention was to insult the Pandavas. This event has been elaborately dealt with by Vyasa. He

has devoted complete twelve chapters for this purpose. For Nala-Damayanti episode, Sarala has taken only four chapters whereas Vyasadeva has described the same episode in long twenty-seven chapters. The placement of episode is also different in both the epics. The episode was described before the griefstriken Pandavas in a 'Catharsis' effect by the sage Brihattama in the original epic whereas in Sarala's Mahabharat Vasyadev narrated it himself.

Poet Sarala's sole intention was to touch the heart of the common mass. Therefore, he, even though a great scholar himself, never desired to give his immortal work a high intellectual touch. Sarala Das has taken the following episodes from the original Mahabharat, Parsuram Janama, Nibata Kabacha Vadha, Nahusa Upakhyana, Dharma Vaka Prasanga, Jayadrath Akhyana, Gangavatarana, Nalaraja Upakhyana and Durvasa Negrah, etc. New episodes like Nikumbha Vadha, Satya-Amba katha, Vetavali Katha, Data Karna Katha, Harischandra Katha, Kirtivasa Daitya Katha, Gaja--Kachhap Yudhya, etc. have been added by him to this Parva. Episodes of Rama and Savitri elaborately dealt with in the original Parva have been totally descarded. Killings of demons, descriptions of few famous Tirthas (only places) are common in both the epics. Gaya, a sacred place believed to be the door of salvation by every religous Hindu, has been described in a sketchy way in the Sanskrit Mahabharat whereas Sarala Das hae depicted its importance in an elaborate manner. Chapters 83 to 90 have been devotad for the description of various sacred places in the original Mahabharat. The description of Varanasi in chapter 84 of this epics is scanty. But Sarala Das has devoted a complete long chapter to described the importance of Manikarnika and Varanasi. He has added the episode of king Harischandra in this chapter.

Both the poets have described the slaying of Nibata-Kavacha, a notorious demon, in their own way. The approach of Vyasadev to this episode is simply idealistic whereas Sarala Das has given it a humanitarian touch, thus making it more acceptable by the common mass. Sarala Das's poetic genius was supplemented by infinite knowledge in almost every branch of scriptures. He was an authority in astronomy and astrology, which he has extensively used through the 18 Parvas of his reknownad work. Elaborate descriptions about the influence of stars and planates on birth, death, marriage and journey etc. find mention in his work. He is still considered to be an unchallenged authority in astrology.

Poet Vyasa has described the episodes of Nahusa, Indradyumna, Dhunduma, Durvasa, Ghosayatra, Jayadrath, Rama, Savitri, Karna, Dharmavaka etc. in Vana Parva. Sarala Das, completely discarded the episodes of Dhunduman and Savitri from his work whereas shown originality will narrating other episodes of Vyasadev's work, While treating different episodes, the sole aim of the poet was to convey the ignorant masses the message of religions and morality in a simple manner. Therefore, he has avoided as far as possible, the analysis of the uninteresting rules and regulations of the scriptures.

Sarala Das's view towards life was totally humanitarian whereas Vaysa wanted to diffuse knowledge of the scriptures. For this, his approach to every episodes has always been idealistic. However, it is not correct to say that Sarala has completely avoided to analyse the deep inner values of the scriptures. Only he has simplified them keeping in mind the requirements of his readers-most of whom were illiterates. Theories of morality have been described in simple

manner and thus well-understood. To illustrate this point one can cite. Yudhistir-Yakhya dialogue which is placed towards the last part of the original Mahabharat. Here, God Dharma himself, disguised as a crane, killed all the Pandavas except Yudhishtira. Yudhishtira answered all the questions asked by Yakhya and thus the deads were enlivened. Poet Sarala in his Mahabharat has only taken the skeleton of this famous episode and has recreated it in his own way. Sarala Das described it in the 8th year of the Vanavasas of Pandavas. Yakhya's question in original Mahabharat are highly intellectual, whereas Sarala has totally simplified them. For example, Vyasa's Yakhya asks, what is the power that revolves the sun, who causes it to set etc. But interestingly Sarala Das, keeping in view the limit of the mental horision of his countless illeterate listners, avoided these intellectual questions. His Yakhsa asks Yudhisthir 'Oh learned one : who controls the king ?" and comes the answer " Religion". One should remember that matters relating to kings and emperors were then easily conceivable and interesting for the common mass. Vyasa's Yakhsa asks, who is a friend in an unknown land ? Yudhisthira replies, a faithful friend. But Sarala's Ydhisthira replies, the friend is the knowledge. This has been conceived, perhaps, from the great Chanakya's' Vidwan sarbatra pujyate' with a view to creat interest for knowledge amongst the illeterate mass. Vyasa's Yakhsa has primarily asked such type of questions, which shows the thoroughness of the poet and this he has done mainly with the aim of diffusion of knowledge. Ka Pantha, Kim Ascharyam, Kah Sukhi, Ka Barta are some of the intellectual questions put on by Vyasa's Yakhsa and likewise the answers are also of high standard. But poet Sarala has conceived the questions from his own surroundings. Questions on earth, sky, water, air, sun, moon, stars and planets, matters easily conceivable by the common mass, have been designed for the benefit of the general readers

and listners. The poet has shown keen interest to solve the eternal doubts about life and death in his own way.

To conclude we can safely declare that while Sarala Das has a total humanitarian approach towards his subject, Vyasadeva has put stress mainly on diffusion of knowledge. Of course, both the poets worked for the betterment of society in their own ways. Both are successful in reaching their goal. Therefore, till tody where Sarala has occupied a rare place in the heart of the common man, Vyasa rules unchallengely over the hearts of the learned community.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF VYASADEVA'S *MAUSALA PARVA* AND *MUSALI PARVA* OF SARALA DAS

J. B. Mohanty

The theme of the sixteenth canto of the Mahabharata of the great poet Vyasa Deba named as *'Mausala Parva'* is comparatively short and its central idea is full of tragic elements. The canto comprising only eight chapateis (Adhyas) may be regarded as the introduction of Mohaprasthanik and Swargarohan Parba. Chronologically it deals with the origin of Musala (the club), increase of unruly behaviour among the inhabitants of Dwaraka and their distraction by Kalapurusa starting with internecine strife among the Yadavas. Departure of Krishna for heaven, Aryan's going to Dwaraka, conversation between Arjun and Basudev, the ladies of Dwaraka being escorted by Arjun to Hastina and the advice of Vyasa to Arjuna are the high lights of this work. In fact this canto does not speak of prowess ·chivalry of the royal family or luxurious living nor of peace and tranquility arising out of spiritual discourse· Rather it shows a tragedy of great magnitude with the moral torpitude of the Yadavas and the frustration of Krushna figuring prominently. On the whole the entire canto deals with a serious and pathetic description of the destruction of the Jadu clan, demise of Krushna and Balaram and the tragic account of the great warrier Arjuna.

The subject matter of this canto in short is as follows— In the 36th year after the coronation of Yudhisthira many womens were noticed at Dwaraka. During this time the morals

of the descendents of Yadu clan were poluted. According to the poet they were not ashmed of commiting sin. They were disregarding their parental superiors, Brahmins and Gods. Save Balarama and Krushns almost all the Jadavas were disregarding their superiors. Wives deceived their husbands and so also the husbands. Almost all were adicted to drinks. Krushna intending to make his people desist from this immoral act of drinking announced his strong proclamation as such none among the Brushni & Andhakas should indulge in drinking liquour. If any one of their family members is found to have been drunk, the entire family will be subjected to death on 'Sula'. But this directive, it appears could not be materialised.

Observing the extreme moral deterioration of the members of his clan Krushna with a view to save them from sure destruction once directed them to go for pilgrimage to Prabhas. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Dwaraka set out for Prabhas with plenty of food stuff including meat and wine. After reaching there they started involving themselves in mass drinking along with music and dance. Being intoxicated they become unrully and violent. Krushna became furious when he behold his son and others were killed by his intoxicated relatives. Thereafter the bunch of *Earaka* plant held by him converted to dangerous iron club weapons. The entire Eraka plants in the locality also converted to clubs and the Yadavas were engaged in mutual fight till all of them were killed.

Thus the Jadu clan was annihilated. Thereafter Krushna found Balaram sitting carelessly on a tree in a lonely place. He told Daruka, his chariotier to proceed immediately to Hastina and to intimate Pandavas about this pathetic event. He also told him to ask Arjuna to come quickly to this place.

Krushna himself went to Dwaraka and after giving necessary advice to Basudev returned back to Balaram. On

reaching there he saw Balaram sitting alona in Yoga posture. In a while a white serpent came out of his mouth & Balaram breathed his last. Then Krishna himself decided to part with his mortal body. Controlling his sense organs and mind he observed deep yoga and slept on the ground. In the mean-time an aggressive hunter named Jara arrived there. Presuming Krushna, clad with yellow cloth, as a dear he arrowed him. But on reaching near to him he realised his mistake. He caught hold of Krushnas feet & repented for his misdeed.

Arjuna hearing the sad news of the demise of Krushna went to Dwaraka and performed the funeral ceremony of the persons who died along with the bodies of Krushna and Balaram. He with the ladies of the Brushni dynasty and Bajra, the grandson of Krushna, returned to Hastina. This parba has been concluded with the advice of Vyasa to Arjuna, Vyasa advised Arjuna not to feel sorry and shed tears for the departed persons and be prepared for the departure from the world as his duty here has been duly fulfilled.

On the other hand *Musali parba* of Sarala Das is the seventeenth parba and is prior to Swargarohana parba. It is also named as *Haribansa Parba.* In the first four chapters of this parba, Sarala has briefly given the subject matter, of course with slight change here and there, as told in the *Musali Parba* of sanskrit Mohabharat. Out of the total thirteen chapters in this parba six chapters (8th to 13th) and also the first and the 6th chapters are but his original creations.

His *Musali Parba* begins dramatically with the worries of lord Krushna. While Kumaroschhab was going on in Dwaraka with profuse pomp and granduour he was reminded of the command of Nirakara Visnu. This was but to leave this world forth with, with which he has so long been deeply attached. He visualised the sure destruction of his dynasty.

Tears came out of his eyes. Akrura noticed it and when he asked about its reason Krushna revealcd his heart and told about the future of his clan and his capital Dwaraka. He advised him to go to Ekamra Tirtha (the present Bhubaneswar) to practise yoga and to visit Nilagiri (the present Puri) afterwards where his worship will be resumed through the image of '*Darubramha*.'

Thereafter through the illusive effect ot Krushna once at the dead of night a great horror of Kokua an imaginary creature, spread over Dwaraka. The inhabitants of Dwaraka with the intention to kill the creature perused in darkness. They ran towards the bank of Yamuna with sticks in their hand. There, they vainly stroke a Kadamba tree which oozed out Kadambari a sweet and intoxicating secretion. They all drank it and were intoxicated. In the darkness of the night they faught among themselves without knowing each other and finally were killed one and all.

Krushna went to Dwaraka made known this tragic story to Basudev and again returned to the bank of Yamuna. In no time before him Balaram breathed his last. Krushna striken with grief slept under a bower At this place the hunter Jara arrived and arrowed his feet wrongly taking it to be the ear of a deer. In no time he realised his mistake and with repentace he and his wife nursed Krushna. Krushna could know that his last moments are drawing near. He sent Jara to Hastina to bring Arjuna to that place. Arjuna arrived and Krushna after giving him his last advice requested him to touch. Arjuna touched him with the help of his bow Gandiba. Immediately all the extra ordinary powers of Arjuna vanished and Krushna died.

Jara and Arjuna arranged the funeral pyre for the consumation of the dead body of Krushna. But they failed. The

unburnt portion of his body was thrown to ocean and was made to float. Jara was divinely ordained to be the worshipper of this unbornt body of Lord Krishna which subsequentey turned out to be the idol of Madhab. Jara took the idol to the top of Dhauli Hill. There he placed him under a Chandan tree and offered puja.

Soon after Arjuna went to Dwaraka and informed Nanda and Basudev about the demise of Krushna and Balaram. On hearing this, both of them cried and the eight queens of Krushna entered the fire and embraced death. Dwaraka was drowned soon after Arjuna left for Hastina with the ladies of the Dwaraka. Arjuna intimated the sad news to Pandavas who became grief striken. During this time Vyasa advised them to crown Parikhit as the king of Hastina and prepare themselves for visiting the places of pilgrimage before departing to heaven.

The poet after this has elaborately described how Shree Mandira or the temple of Jagannath was erected at Nilagiri, first by the king Galamadhab and then by Indradyumna. This episode has been appended as a sequence of the Krushna's death and has been cleverly connected with the worship of Lord Jagannath at Puri. This is probably the first recorded account about the glorification of Jagannath. The episode as conceived by the poet is as follows :

King Galamadhab a devotee of Vishnu of Haihaya dynasty wanted to have a Madhab idol for his worship. He engaged a Brahmin named Bidyapati or Basudev. Basudev after a long journey happened to meet Jara Sabar in his village in a dense forest. He came to know that this Sabara is worshipping Madhab. He made friendship with him and once was able to have his 'darsan' in the mountain cave where he was taken blind folded. After this he returned to Galmadhab and narrated his experience. The king withoat delay went with

his troops to the said Sabar village. But to his surprise and and disappointment the idol of Neelamadhab was disappeared. The king became suspicious and fought with Jara and his clan and killed many of his people. But it was a fruitless affair. He meditated and in the night Madhab appeared in dreams before him. Madhab blamed the king for killing his innocent people. He cursed him thus: You have killed the relations of my devotee Jara Sabar. For this evil deed of yours none will survive in your family. The decendants of Jara hence forth will have the right to perform my pooja. However, you can go to Jamanik tirtha, the present, Puri and construct a temple for my worship. The king accordingly performed this. But none in his family survived.

After some years another king a devotee of Visnu named Indradyumna, while on expedition came to Nilagiri. He heard the story of Galmadhab and wanted to construct another temple there. For the purpose the stones were brought from Bhubaneswar and were used in the construction of this temple. Indradyumna also sought the advise of Jara who was then worshipping Gomukhi Kesab regarding the installation of the idol in his newly built temple. In the night Visnu told him in dreams that I will appear as a log of wood in the sacred small tank named Rohini Kunda. Accordingly the king came with Jara to Nilagiri and saw the sacred log of wood. Both of them took the log and placed it in the temple premises. Meanwhile Bramha appeared there as a carpenter. He took charge of building the idols out of the said log of wood with the condition that the door of the temple should remain closed till he announces it to be opened. But the king impatiently opened it after ten days. To his surprise he found three incomplete idols. These three idols are Subhadra Jagannath and Balaram corresponding Bramha, Visnu and Maheswar According to the decision of the King Indradyumna the *Daitas* or the decendants of Jara Sabara were to

perform the pooja and other rituals during the Naba Kalebara or the rebuilding of the statues of the god Trio, Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. But the decendants of Vidyapati or Basudev, the Brahmin priest got the privilege of priesthood of the three gods.

Thus the theme of *Musali Parba* of Sarala Das to a great extent differs from the *Mousal Parba* by Vyasa. The terrible Kala Purusa as described by Vyasa has been treated by Sarala Das in a different way being named as Kokua an imaginary creature for whom Dwaraka faced disaster. Sarala has also named Eraka forest as Santara forest. Demise of Balaram has been depicted differently by Sarala Das. In Vyasa's Mohabharat Krushna sent the sad news of the destruction of the Jadu clan through Daruka, his charioteer. But in Sarala's Mahabharat we find Jara has been deputed to Hastina for meeting Arjuna. Besides Sahadev's advice to Arjuna not to touch Krushna for loss of vital energy and Krushna's request to Arjun to touch him before his death he being a part and parcel of Arjuna, fight between Jara and Arjuna collecting fuel for the cremation of the mortal body of Krushna, the episode of the worship of Sabari Narayan and the consignment of the unburnt body of Krushna to the waters of the ocean—these are some of the outcome of Sarala's imagination and speak of his originality.

The last six chapters as stated before from 8th to 13th are Sarala's additions in which we find the description of Madhab worship of Jara Sabara, construction of the temple by Galamadhab, effect of the fight between Sabara and Galamadhab, construction of the temple at Shreekhetra by Indradymna, the temple of Jameswar, Markanda and the story Gomukha Visnu and innaguration of the three idols made out of the sacred log of wood etc. are Saralas originately found in this parba. In this portion of the

Mahabharata Jara has been depicted as the main character. The poet has portrayed him as a great worrier, a devoted worshiper of Visnu. Besides other characters such as Shree Krushna, Galamadhab. Indradumna, Biswabasu etc. occupies the most important position in Seralas work. Sarala in this portion of his Mohabharat has elaborately described the incidents which occured after the demise of Lord Krushna.

It may humbly be admitted that the solemnity and the sublinity of thought as depicted in the Mohabharat of Vyasa Dev is not found in the works ofSarala Das. Sarala Das was a great visionary and a great story teller, It seems for this reason, he has incorporated many new incidents, different from the original Sanskrit Mohabharat. He has given due recognisition to the non-Aryan culture and characters belonging to it. This is the main characteristic of his Mohabharat. He, through the medium of the episodes, has cleverly demonstrated the evil effects of drinking, unruly behaviour, lack of self-control and unchecked growth of population in his clan. Sense of remorse as depicted in the character of Shree Krushna may be taken as a unique conception of Sarala Das, which is not found in the works of Vyasa Dev. Thus Krushna says :

"Sekale Mattagarbe Bahuta Rati Kalu
Kutumba Badhante Eba Maya Mohenu Padilu
Chhadi gibaku Ebe Nabalai chitta
Jenukari Krodhe Lotaka bahai beni Netra."

(Sarala Mohabharata P .5)

"He Pandita gane Bahuta Kutumbe
Bahuta Krodhi Sina Hoele Basudeve
Eteka Kutumba arjili Sina Muhim
Puni Maraili Anyo anji Karai."

(Sarala Mohabharata P. 33)

It means : In the days of my unbridled youth I indulged in amorous escapades. Through these clandestine activities my tribe increased and I am tied down by worldly attachments. Unable to shake off these coils of mortality I feel greatly unhappy. Vasudev, the poet says, became extremely morose due to the unusual growth of population and indiscipline in his family and destruction through mutual conflict for which he felt himself responsible.

Thus *Musali Parba* of Sarala Das exhibits his unique poetic imagination, excellence in characterisation, sense of patriotism and scholarship. This parba also reveals the intention of the poet to highlight the importance of the places of pilgrimage of Orissa. For this reason the poet has skillfully included the references of Ekamra Khetra (Bhubaneswar), Konarka, Shreekhetra Nilagiri (Puri) Madhab worship in Prachi valley and worship of Sabari Narayan. Needless to say that this is indicative of the poets deep sense of patriotism and awareness of the eternal human problems. He has synthesised Sabari Narayan and Madhab worship of Orissa with the Pan - Indian Krushna worship and culture.

By the time of Sarala Das the worship of Visnu gained ground in Orissa. Infact it was well established superseding the older Saiva Cult. Possibly for this reason the poet has described the importance of coordinated worship of Hari-Hara and Brahma after the annilulation of Haribansa, the dynesty of Krushna. Through his elaborate description of the construction of the temple of Lord Jagannath and the installation of Chaturdha murti in the temple he has glorified the cult of Jagannath. Rightly he is regarded as the first and the foremost poet of modieval Orissa. In view of this the excellence of the great poet Sarala Das can not be denied.

THE MAHABHARATA IN ORIYA

C. R. Das

There are mainly two Mahabharatas in the Oriya language. The one is by Sarala Dasa popularly called the Adikabi, and the other is by Raja Krushna Singha. The latter is mostly a direct rendering from Vyasa's Sanskrit original and was brought out quite a few centuries after the former. Sarala Mahabharata, on the other hand, is a complete transcreation and has been written as it were, in defiance of the original.

Sarala Dasa has been hailed as the Adikabi in Oriya literature by whoever has discussed the latter's evolution and landmarks as a poet, There are of course more pieces written by Sarala Dasa but his Oriya Mahabharata is, for all intents and purposes, the first specimen of what is really Oriya literature, available up-to-date. And a very brilliant specimen for that matter. Sarala Dasa wrote his Mahabharata sometime in the middle of the fifteenth century when Kapilendra Deba was the King of Orissa. Dr. Krushna Chandra Panigrahi, the eminent writer of Orissa's history thinks that the writing was started during rhe reign of Kapilendra (1435—1467) and completed during the reign of the next ruler Purusottama (1467—1497).

The poet's real name by birth was Siddheswara Parida or Dasa and he submits that he took his latter new name, because whatever he achieved as a poet and as an author was because of the grace of Goddess Sarala, the presiding deity of his village Jhankada, situated in Cuttack district.

In the Mahabharata again, he speaks of himself as almost a half-literate person who never had any initiation into the learning of the time: The years of his life, he adds, had been a waste in unworthy company and he had never sat together with Brahmins who were then recognized as having any real knowledge of the scriptures. He says he had never made any guru nor had he practised any ousterity with any special mantra as his guide. But he has nevertheless told us in the same work that in one of his previous births he was no less a person than Kalidasa, the great name from Ujjain nearly ten centuries ago.

Sarala Dasa's Mahabharata is anything but a faithful translation of the original work in Sanskrit, on the contrary, it is a new creation in itself. Taking the main purport of the story of the Sanskrit Mahabharata as a skeleton minimum them, he has added all the variations of flesh to it to build it in to a full structure complete in itself. Many things and themes of tne original have been eliminatsd and many others, new ones, have been interpolated. There have been changes in emphasis in several cases. For example, the portion that contains the Shrimadbhagabadgita gets only a cursory treatment and is done with only in a few lines. Though the number of Parvas has remained the same as in the original, the parva captions are sometimes entirely different. There have been elaboration of some Parvas and some others again have found a place into the work only because the author just wanted them.

Coming to the particular chapters of the great epic, Sarala Dasa has given Karna an edge over Arjuna as a hero, the former standing for real dignity, achievement and prowess. Krushna seems to be very much less of a god-stature and often carries an impression of having not been very much more than asenior accomplice on the side of

the five brothers. Stories have been woven out in and out of occasion to convince the reader as it were that one ought to go to Mahabharata primarily for the sake of the stories and not for its religious implications, which provide just a garb for the stories. Nevertheless, there is also a very deep appeal to religion in the work which is above anything else still used as a religious book by the people, as a Purana in which gods speak to men and throw out a precept. Lord Jagannatha of Puri has been sung by the author of the Oriya Mahabharata as the Avatari, the source of all the other Avataras of God, Jagannatha is the embodiment, in very same conception, of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He is also the great Buddha. Yet more interesting and intriguing is Sarala Dasa's presentation of how Jagannatha came to be in his present shape in the Kali era. According to him, it was Ekalabya, Jara whose destiny it was to be an instrument for Lord Krushna's departure from the world. After his death, a portion of the half-charred body served to become the essential sarira of the deities now being worshipped in the temple at Puri.

Scholars have found out grounds to believe that by the time to which Sarala Dasa belonged, the three traditions of Yoga, Tantra and Kamashastra had come to be mixed up with one another to form a queer amalgam, and also that Sarala Dasa, our poet had particularly studied Vatsayana, the Indian code-maker of eroticism. It was the time also when Vajrayana and Sahajayana had just gone through the period of their flourish and their vestiges were very much in the air. The erotic representation on stone on the walls of Orissan temples suggest how the sacred and the profane had compromised into a co-existence and were confused enough to suggest each other.

Sarala Dasa was not a poet of any court, he was very much of the village to which he owed all his nurture. It was

the deity of the village that gave him the sensibilities of a poet and it was in tha same village also that he wrote all the three major works of his life : the Mahabharata, the Bilanka Ramayana and the Chandi Purana. In the last of the three books, Sarala Dasa mentions that he got the name Sudramuni for himself by the grace of the great mother of the world. Nevertheless, it may be assumed that it must have been a very tough job for the poet to write books and to get them recognized by contemporary taste so far away from the king and his court, and, as a final climax, to proclaim himself Sudramuni. It is not true that the poet called himself so because he belonged to the Sudra or non-Brahmin caste, It was a time when all the pundits were invariable Brahmins and looked down upon all who wrote and yet belonged to the outgroups as nothing but Sudras. As a straight challenge to it and in refutation of this prejudice of the pundits, Sarala Dass appears to have coluntarily given this title to himself. He was the first in Oriya literature to prove that a Sudra could also be a muni and wanted to smash an elitist superstition.

The works of Sarala Dasa are a literature of protest. They were a protest against the poets and writers of the court at a time all literature was possible only when the court was there to patronize it. It was a protest against the empty religiosities of the time with the King as their chief protagonist, and also against all writting in Souskit which was also patronized by the king. The real lite that was then lived far away from the King and his court, the beliefs and the many superstitious that had evolved along the ages in the shape of worships and Inspirations out of the several religious traditious which had their sway ova the land, there was almost no outlet to give an expression to these. It was Sarala Dasa who took to the pen to bring in all that to literature and filled in the gap. He brought the wider

entirety of life into the realm of the Kavya, and with the broad structures of the Mahabharata story and Mahabharata names as an apology as it were, he could intrude into almost all the details of that entirety.

He gave life to the gods of heaven and brought them down to earth. The Kurukshetra that he described was spread immediately around him, and the very experiences and the insights that he had gained living in the milieu of his time gave a brilliant fervour of contemporaneity to whatever he wrote. He looked with a wide open eye without any inhibition and loved life as it was and had its being. The characters he created in his epic works bear a proof and a suggestion that the gods are really the outcomes of the concretizing zeal of the imaginative faculty in man, that they become more real and mobile when enriched with the inherent human capacity for myth and imaginative play. Then the gods become the channels to lead us in to the innermost drives in man, where they are so mobile and so grand. In Sarala Dasa, we have both the chaste and the obscene, true and the untrue, possible and the impossible. And giving everything a unifying sense is the eye of a poet that can see, manipulate, and that has emboldened itself by the sanction of a goddess as it were to speak whatever strikes the sensibility.

More than anything else, Sarala Dasa has so brilliantly proved to his times that the Oriya language could make really many things possible, and that in respect of the competence to express itself, Oriya in no way fell behind Sanskrit as a medium. One may recall two celebrated names who preceded Sarala Dasa by only about a century, Shri Viswanatha Kaviraja and Jayadeva. These wrote only in Sanskrit, perhaps they thought Oriya or the spoken language of the people was not rich enough to be used as a medium

or they did not have the courage to deviate from Sanskrit to Oriya and incur the displeasure of the Establishment.

Sarala Dasa's works contain a wide range of cooked up legends and stories and hence perhaps very little of actual history, like all the Puranas of India. Sarala literature is an enviable sage in poems. It is true that he had collected a huge pile of materials from the Puranas and the like, but many times more than that from the life around him. He could make everything so enticing and rich with the wisdom and wit of the creative artist that was in him. In these flights of his creative courage, he could ignore with so much ease the lines and the limits that had bound the current gods and goddesses with sanctions of sanctity, he flouted the scriptural inhibitious and made the gods dance on the ropes of stories and allusions fabricated by him. The Puranas were the most accepted reference books of that time and they were written not so much to sing the power and the glory of the gods as to establish a particular sect of worshippers and their gods as the highest and the most bounteous of all others. To appear convincing and appealing to the lay worship-obsessed mind, these were full of all and sundry stories and narratives. The latter were current in the society in which Sarala Dasa lived, like a master craftsman he incorporated all that to his works giving them shapes and shines of his own innovation. That could be expected only from a Sudra who had the courage in him to declare himself as a muni.

Two instances should suffice here to illustrate the point. They involve the two gods that were then worshipped as the most capable ones most probably by two sects often at war with each other for an edge over the other. The first involves Shiva in the form of the linga and an explanation about the beginning of Linga worship. Sarala Dasa, without

any support from the Saiva scripture takes us to the occasion when Shiva's wife had to immolate herself into the sacrificial fire to save herself from the derogatony words her father Daksha had used on her face before a whole crowd that and assembled on the occasion of a sacrifice. The news when it reached Shiva threw the latter into great fury and he immediately rushed to the scene as the angry husband to punish the culprits. Of cource it was also his father-in-law's house where it was customary to welcome the husband of the house when he happended to come there with a certain ceremony. As Sati's mother came to perform the ceremony as Shiva entered the palace, it must have been too much of an invitation fo him. In a feat of complete abandon to his anger and disgust he took off the skirt of his tiger-skin which was using as a garment' as a result of which the entire area of his private part was visible. He gave the behest to his mother-in-law to perform the necessary ritual to the Linga thus exposed. She did do as directed, but in her turn uttered a curse that the Shiva, would be worshipped in the form of a Ling by the people of the world for all time to come. That is how, according to Sarala Dasa, the practice of Linga worship has come to prevail.

The next story is about no less a god then Krishna himself. Sarala Dasa says that Brahma, the creator had given a certain instrument to Krishna with which he could get an underground tunnel dug straight to the private chamber of Radha, his paramour, which he could make use of at his convenience. The tunnel was really dug by the son that was born because of the sexual union Krishna and with a lady messenger of Radha whom he mistook in his passuin for Radha herself. Krishna, it is told, taught this son of his the skill to dig tunnels with the said instrument, and in a gesture of his

gratitude in return, the son had dug the intended channel for his father. The whole story has been engineered with such simplicity and wit that you begin to enjoy it and forget the tinge of obscenity it may traditionally seem to suggest.

Sarala Dasa's Mahabharata in Oriya gives a picture of the contemporary society, in spite of the enrmous myth-making he has chosen to be his style in the writing of it. The work is still a popular companion in the village of Orissa and is still read aloud as a purana to the village congregat-ions for the benefit and enjoyment of all. Same of the words and idioms have permanently found their way into the Oriya language and are still in vogue. Sarala Mahabharata is perhaps the first of its kind in any Indian language. The Bengalee Mahabharata came nearly two centuries later. The Mahabharata in Telgu took as many as three successive poets to be complete and the entire thing was ready only in the eighteenth century. More than that, it appears from tha recorded accounts of the regional liteartures of India that in no other language we have a poet of Sarala Dasa's stature and genius appearing as early as his time and undertaking such a work.

The Mahabharata in Oriya, in many respects, has laid the very foundation of Oriya literature. Oriya language and vocabulary came up age in the hands of Sarala Dasa. Preten-ding to be nothing more than a re-rendering of an old story from the great tradition, the Oriya Mahabharata gave unpre-cedented props to the little tradition and brought the latter as brilliantly into the mainstream of the formes.

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THE MAHABHARATA AND BENGAL

S. C Moitra

The legends connected with the houses of Kurus and Pandavas attained a peculiar relevance in Bengal. The Mahabharata did not depcit a Lila of a particular hero. A popular saying, '*Yaha nai Bharate taha nai Bharate.* What connot be found in the Mahabharata cannot be detected in India'—largely speaks the truth about the great book. The question of identification of a particular hero is a very challenging task. One of the maior poets of Bengal Navin Chandra Sen took Krsna as the hero of the book, but another poet of the modern age attributed this destinction to Yudhisthira. The debate over this question is yet open.

The Mahabharata asserted its influence over the people of Bengal even before the Gupta rule. The tales concerning Arjuna and Jarasandha were known to the people of Gaudadesa and Pundravardhana. Both of them had attained a status equivalent to god.

But some of the historions of Bengali culture underestimated the degree and depth of influence of the legend. Professor Sukumar Sen wrote his *Bangala Sahityer Itihas* (Vol. 1. Page 280). " *Mahabharata sloka Kichu Kichu*

Tamrasasan stambha utkirna Thaka. Kuru-Pandava kahene E d.sher Loker Kache Paricita chila na, Paharpurar Bhagna mandir theka E vishaya Koua chabi poa yai ni.
' Some of the slokas of the Mahabharata were used in the inscriptions but it was not much known to the people of this Land.

This is far from historical evidences. Many personal names were coined after the names of characters of this legend even in the early period of the Gupta rule. This cannot happen unless the legend had been popular for a long time. In the Paharpur copper plate grant of the Gupta era, 159 a witness to the grant was named Yudhisthira A copper plate grant of Gopachandra also speaks of a witness named Yudhisthira. The very name supposes the anxiety of the received (Grahita) about the truthfulness of the statement visa-vir the reliability of the deed. We donot get surprises when the name of a person as Bhimadeva is inscribed on a copper plate in the later age. But we get surprised because the name of Bhimadeva was bestowed upon a man who was a worshipper of Prajna Paramita. He was a Buddhist devotee (*Vajrajojini* copper plate of the king Samal Varman). Without a wide and deep acquaintance with the legend people can hardly name their children in this fashion reference of the Mahabharata are to be, found when a king or a chief or a Commander of the army was to be praised for his particular quality. In the Dhanaidaha and Damodarpur copper plates kings were enlogised for their unusual zeal for charity. In the Khalimpur copper plate of Dharmapatadeva the king was equated with Nala Here Nala was chosen not for his angeuish and anxiety for his consent Damayanti, but for his look of charity. In the Munghyr &

Bhagalpur copper plates of Durapaladeva and Naraiupaladwa kings were landed for their bounty, but there they had been compared with Karuva. We donot know what prompted the scrive to choose Karna, not Yudhisthira, was there any relivance of the change of environ. Muaghyr was the ancient Mungiri, it was in the very heart of Auga, an ancient name for Bhagalpur revision.

The influence of his sacred book went deeper. In the copper plate inscriptions or Gopachandra of Kaptidwa references of the Mahabharata are discernible. But Gopachandra was King Barak Mandal in Faridpur, Kantidwa was a minister or a vasal of a Pata King. Both of them were Buddhists.

Also prises full upon the Kings for their valour. In the copper plate of Dharmadity (himself a Buddhist) the King was discribed as an incarnation of Arjuna. Viyoisen of Deopara miscrption was compared with Rama and Arjuna.

Soon a Tuoushka conqueror was flattered with the same historical language.

> " With whom shall we found out the sirnilitude of this vangeuisher of enemies- with Rama, the Chief of in numerable monkey. Soldiers, or with Arjuna, the commander of Pandava army ? "

The flattery of the poet may be despisable but it fespeaks the popularity of the legend' .

People used to read Mahabharata and a Brahmin was engaged to read it properly. In the Manhauli copper plato

inscription of Madanpaladwa it is recorded that "the gifts of a village situated in the mandala of Halavasrta, wthin the Visnyu of Kotivashra (KOTI VARSH) lying in the jurisdicstion of `undrabardhana ubukti to one Sri Batesvara Srami Varmans buing his fee for chanting the Mahabharata at the request of Citra Matika Devi, the Chief queen of the King Mudaupalaowa." The very inscription began with a salution to Lord Buddha (Namo Buddhaya).

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Other than incriptional devidences there are a few sculptural illustratious narrating the legend.

In the panel no 54 of Paharpur hrouastiy a scene depicting elopement of Subhadra by Arjuna was very skillfully engraved; as we see Krana offering a mockfight to resirt Arjuna in his amorous venture. (Memoirs of A 57, No. 53-K.N. Dikshit).

In Mahasthan's (old Pundravardhana) a plague is unearthed where Durymanta was hunting a deer (or a young lady) in the hermitage of the ascetic Karuva. Sculptural evidences concerting this legend are few and far between.

"3"

Reshouse of literature to this legend is not so smell. In the the Nataka-Laksm ana-rotna Kori four dramas based on the Mahabharata episodes were referred. But all these dramas centred round the tale of Kicaka probably the dramas were written in a period when the court was immersed in fales or debanchry and gluttory.

In the Ramcantarn of Sandhyakara Nandrn Karna was mentioned in connection with the hero's love of charity (sloka 43, chapter—1) of Yudhisthira was also referred to. (Sloka—47, Kavipras'a sti): Arjuna was for the valour of the king (sloka—20, chapter—4).

In some Koza granthas there are plenty of small pieces (Prakirva karita) which took inspiration from the episodes of different heroes of the Mahabharata. In our poem by Gogesoara Karna was praised for his charity, Bhima for his valour, Duhsasana was denounced for his misdeed-i.e. violating the modesty of Draupada. Yudhisthira was once feferred to, lent over for verture of charity, but for his folly of gambling (sl. 1339, Subhasitartnakora) Vyasa the poet was praised for his gigantie feat of writing such a book. In the Sadukti Karnamrta of Sridhara Dash this legend do not receive adequate attention. There are only three pieces with direct link with the legend. Only one poem speaks of a new hero he is Bhisma. He is praised not for his proficiency in warfare, but for his unimplachable moral character. Karna was once denounced for sustain glory (Karnagarba), another time he was praised for his genersity. The king was described as Kabikula, Karna Karna of the Iron Age.

Thus the Mahabharata was appreciated in a peculiar way. It didnot teach any domestic virtue, it propagated only social virtues. So none of the Mahabharata had not attended a godhead. But this did not present it from becoming a popular legend. The thesis put forward by Prof. Sukuna Sen " Mahabharata Scdas'a Satakar Age Bahu Pracanta hoi in. (page—185) is far from any historical support.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SANSKRIT AND TELUGU *MAHABHARATAS*

G. Parthu Sarathy Rao

Of the two great Indian epics the Mahabharata composed by Veda Vyasa occupies a unique place in the classical sanskrit literature. Ignoring hereon the first epic (i. e.) Valamiki's Ramayana, Mahabharata is praised as the fifth Veda. "Bharatam Pancamo Vedah"—The reason for this has been given by Veda Vyasa himself.

" Dharamecanthe ca Karmeca mukse ca purusan sabha
Yadihisti tadayate yanne hastina kute eit".

It is the great future of the people of Andhra that this fifth Veda was translated into Telugu by three poets of different times— Nammaya, Tikkame, and Errapragada. Communsurate to their skill in poetry these three were respectively praised as Vaganu sasana, Kavi Brahma, and Prabandha Parameswara. Of the 18 sections of Parvans in the Mahabharata Nannaya translated first two and half sections and Tikkana the rest of the text. Errapregada translated the portion left over by Nannaya, in the third section.

In the present paper, the author attempts to show, how

Nannaya the first one, to begin the translation-work managed to fulfil his job, as a faithful reporter of the contents of the Sanskrit Mahabharata. To deal with the two translators also is a very work that can not form to scope of this paper with limited space and time.

First it has to be noted that Nannaya did not closely follow the original text, while translating it. Ho was a free master of the situation, capable middling with the original, wherever he felt it necessary. The method of his traslation is mainly based on five points which are partly seen in Tikkana's translation also.

1. Some times he closely followed the original and did his business without missing a single point.
2. At times he abridged the ideas in the original leaving not so important and avoidable ones.
3. On some occasions he elaborated the ideas presented in a brief forms in the original.
4. However, there are also situations where he deviated from the original and added new ideas to enrich his translation.
5. On a few occasions he completely left off some portions without translating them.

Such riceties are indeed necessary for an independent translator and earlier Alankarikas like Vamana were fully aware of such odjustments.

"Padarthe Vakyaracana Vakyarteca padabhidha,
Prandhir Vyasasa ma sanca sabhiprayat vamasya ca"

It gors without saying that Nannaya, as the method of his composition shows, was fully aware of the prominent

theories of Alankara Sastra like Dhvani, Riti, Aucitya and Vakrokti. In the field of Telgu literature he is respected as another Valmiki, born to create "Classical Telgu literature." Hence the Andhra Mahabharata though is generally conside-red as a translation, is also reckoned as the 'Adi-Kavya' in Telgu. It is not only the first work in the field but the best one also. Nannaya was fully confident of the virtues of his work and so declared his work also as great as the fifth Veda (i.e.) the original Sanskrit Mahabharata.

"Saramatim gavindrulu Prasanna kathe kalitarthe yukti lo-narasi melune mitaru lok sana ramyata naderimpa na na rucirathe saktimithi nannaya bhattu tenur gunan meta bharata samhitaracane bandhurudayye jagaddhitambugan"

Even the later poets like Srinethe, recognised his supreme status as the creator of classical Telgu literature.

"Nettujoni Kolutunannaya
Bhittopadhyaya sarvabhanmuni gavita
Pattabhishiktu bharata
ghattollarighana pati sthi gadha Pratrbhun"

Now follows an account of how Nannaya managed to follow closely the original. In the 'Adiparvan'. Brahma addressed the following verses to Agni who refused to discharge his duties as the presiding duty of the sacrifices.

"Lokanamiha sarvesam tram karta ca vita evaca
Tram dharayasi likantrin gunamam ca pravantakah
Kasma deva sa mudhestvam Tsastvam hutasanah
tram pavitram sada loke sarvabhutagatas' ca he
satram sarva sarirem sanvabhaksatramesyasi
tatha traderciri dagdham sarvam sudham bhavisyati

Now follows Nannaya's translation.

"Prakatita bhuta saritatiki bhartavu inva caracara
pravr. thiki masi letublustsadava devamukhundava
niku visavabha raka bhuvanepravartana parasimukha
bhavamu bondapodiya"

Similar is the treatment given to the advice of Dundu-bhat Ruru. "Brahmanah saumya bhavena jayatiti purasmtih, Alimsa satya vacanam ksmaati vimiseitam" Ksatiyasya ca yo dharmah sa nehesyati vaitava"

Nannaya's translation is as follows :

"Bhunuta kirti brubmansudu puthudu trdana puthanu-ttama Juanamu sarvabhutahita sanhita buddliyu eithe santiyun manama depratanamu samatvamu santataveda vidhyanu sthinamu satyavaksam dhrdha vratramum gamna-paratva

"Inthi darunakriya rambhambu ksatriyelakum gaka-mun' brahma nulakun jasmme Brahma iulahimsaparulu"

Two more illustrations under the same heading.

Ahaniyuyudha Bhismo dasaiva paramestavit
Ahant panca Dronasca sanaksa kuruvahimim
Ahani yuyudha dvatu kernah para balindanah
Salyordha divasam casid gadayuddham tatah param"

Here is Nannayas translation—

Padi dinambulu Bhismudahava bharakundu gumndu pamcadivasambulu garnudun divasadvayambu dinardhanam duditatijudu Salyudatyadhikogra viragade ranam badi dinandhamugaga nithi mahabhayankaravrthiton"

In the context of Kumarastapradars' anam' we have
"Pantha yathe krtam karma visesavadaham tatah
Karisya pasyatam nrnam mabhudatrumi vismayah

The Telgu-Version for this—

"Nivakadu nerpukadava
gavelavader vini k ,nmi garacitimemun
in vidyablla jupudu
me virulu suci melu melani pogadan".

We come to the next point where Nannaya epitonized in brief the long passeges found in the original, partly for the reason that some details are not necessary and some others are redundant or repetitive. Tne first instance that occurs to us in this context is the conversation between Devayani and Kacha— the former proposing to marry the latter.

Kacha addresses Devayani—

Pujyo manyasca bhagavan yathi tava pita mama
tathitva manavadyarigi pujaniyatama mama,
Amiyojya niyoktum mam Devayani na carhasi
Prasidamahyam subhru tram gurorglmtara subhe,
Yatiositarm visataksi traya camdrami bhaname
Tatrihamushi to bhadue kuksau karyasya bhiruimi
Mamatavam bhagiri bhadra malvarm vaceh sube mane
Sukharasuryu sito badhu ma manyuh Vidya to mama,
Avirdhema dharmasya smartavvyosham ka than tare
Apramattot thita rityrma ra dhaya gurum mama..........

Many more vorses are to be seen in the original in this context. Nammaya summered up the main points in all these verses and presented them into small "Kanda"- Vereses.

A Kacudatyamta Visa
dakuludai lokamimdyamagu marthemu ri
Vakumaku deccu trcitarne ?
maku saho darivi rivu ma citt mumam
Gurulaku sisyutu putrulu
Para mairthe men loksdharmapathi auadi dirim
Parikikpaka ipalukulu
Ta ini guru puti riku dagun palukam "

Almost in the same context when Sarmistha wore the clothes of Devayani, Devayani grew angry and repudiated her. Now follows the reply of Śarmistha to Devayani.

Asimam ca sayamam ca pitra to pitaram maama
Stauti vandati ca shillsmam micaisthitra linitarat,
Stuvato duhitatram vai yacatah pratigrbmatah
Sutaham stuyamimasya dadato spratigrhmatah
Lapsyase prati yoddharam ma ca tram gamya myaham,
Piatikulam vadaci et itah prabhrti yacaki
Akasya. mama dasibhih prasthipyasi balurbalih "

Now follows the brief translation of Nammaya

Mayayyaku:bayakapani
Soyucu divimci priyaruseyucu mundum
miyayya vindi mahimula
mayoddama paluka miku mimayu bede"

Here is an interesting scene where Yayati, having been cursed by Sukre became pre-maturely old. He requested his sons to give him their yantra and receive his old age, which charge was granted by Sukre. The reply given by his sons is recorded in the Sanskrit Mahabhareta as follows :—

Yaduh uvaca' " Sites' masim siradimam jaraya

jaraya sithili krtah valisammata gitrsia dundaso
durbalah krtah; Asaktah karya karama paribhu tassa
Yaufane, Sahopaji vi bhi scaiva tam jaram naiva
kamaye"
Turvasuruvaca, " Nakamaye Jaram tata Kamabhoga prama
simim ;
Bala in Patna Karrim buddhi prana viva sirim
Drahyah Vtvaca : Jirnah sisuvadadate Kab Snnamssuci ryathi
Na juhotica Kalegrim ma budhyati ca Kabatah"
Na ca Krtyam Karotyesa tarm jaram nabhikamaye "
Areuh uvica : " Na hastnam naro ma s'vam jirmobhuikte
napithakam
Vagurbhagisya bhafati tam jaram naiva kamaya"

Nannay howhever summed up the replies of the sons individually given, into one single reply and presented it as one given collectively.

" Tagili jarayu rujayu daiva vasam buna
nayyanemi vami mamm bha vin tu
Kaka yerigi yerigi Kadagi ireuti je
Koudurayya yett kumatulaime ;
Maralugala Kammu mal mamu
darurulu rajuduru daya dhama patiya yyan
buru su du durfara jara
paribhu ti mabhistthe blogabalyudu gade "

Now he approach another aspect of Nannaya's translation where he enlarged the ideas given briefly in theoriginal. In the first 'Asfasi' of the first "Panvari the line" janamejayah Pariksitah saha bhratrbhih Kurukestre digtasatrme rabhati sme; Occurs which assumed a whole verse in the translation of Nannaya.

"Pratihatas'a tru vi kramudupan nara varmsa vivardha
mundu su
Fratu du pari k si da trra judava dya viduruder draakirti mi
rmits vividha dhvaremdu janami jayudan janapaluduthama
stutamati dirghasatu majutundona rimce subhebhi kanuk-
siyai "

In another context, cyavame who prematurely dropped from the womb of his mother, was described as havihg the luste of the sun. A dityavarcasam" Nannaya however employed a while verse expatiating here idea.

" Samuditasririya sahesro
Pama dussahoteju jagadupaplava suma yo
dyama diptati vrapavaka
samu jucurcu nasure bhasmasitkr tuda yyen

In the same "Parvan" in the second chapter, we find that Brahman advised Ananta to make friends with Garuda, a great warrior.

Suparmam ca sahiyam vai Bhagavana merottamrh
Pradadimam a mamtaya Vainateyam pitamahah

Nannaya put this idea in a more elaborate form.

"Vinataku nitmajunbayina firudu kasyapava lakhilyasa
nmunurla varasubuganna Khagamvkhyadu Vasavanorci
yunnesa
dvinuta balundu karuna vivekamunan vinatatanujuto
ghanamuga jalmi seyumidi Karyamurika bhujangamesvara

In the translation we find the words of Brahman are more concerning. One more, and I shall finish this aspect. The physical beauty of Menaka as described in the Sanskrit Mahabharata is very brief, which Nannaya is very elaborate.

"Amin dasyava yonupasyad vivatam tada"
Alasala yoppaga damini yammuni valla bhumnola runna !as
mmilita sugandha bandhura samira vasambuna desli balapai
Valuvedalan bayalpadiya valdakucambulu gaksa yugama-
mmun
Lalita krsodarambu darala trivaliyuta romerajiyun

Now we come to deviationg and enrich meant by adding a new ideas. In the story of Udanka, Pausya the King caused Udanka when the latter cursed him for some petty reason. Late Udanka repeated and withdraw his curse. But Pausya could not do it as his mind was completely polluted In the orginal it is said "Naham s'aktah sapam pratyadatum me hi me manyuradyiei upasamam gachhati"-Nannaya puts this idea in a very convincing manner, in his translation keeping in view the nature of a brahmin and a ksatriya.

"Nindu manambu maryanavamuta saminamu palkar damna
Khandala susta tulyamu jaganmta vipuleyandu nikkami
rendunurajulandu viparita mugavuma vipuloper
Pandati santudayyu manapaludu kopamugrammalimpagan"

Another incident where Nannaya deviated from the original, can be treated in the curse given by Bhrgu to Agni—

" Presto hi saksyam janemanos nyathi vadit
Sapurva tmanah sapta kule hanyit tathi paran
Yasca karya thstattrajno janemino mo shisat
Sospi tinaiva papene lipyati natisamsayah"

Here follows Nannaya's translation.

'Tana yeuingina yarthamboru
Danaghi idiyethu seppu maniyadigina ji—

Ppanivadunu satyamu se
ppanivadunu ghoranaraka pankamunabadun"

Here according to Bhrgu the result of such an evil dead is equal to that of the killing of people of seven generations on either side. Nannaya however simply put it that particular sinner goes to the darkest hill.

In a tiny instance, while vyasu was picturesqualy elaborate Nannaya was pointed by brief. Kasyapa brought back to life the tree which was burnt to ashes by the poisonous sting of Taksaka. The way the tree cameback to life was given as follows in the original.

" Sankuram taru krtavan tatah parnadva yanvitam
Patasinam sakhinam ca tathi vitapinam pusnah"

Nannaya simply absorved "Eppati yatla vrksmbu ga jisme" meaning that the tree was brought back to life and its original site instantaneously.

Now we shall come to the last point where Nannaya left some portions in the original, without translating thereon.

In the original, one finds the praise of Agni by puloma—

"Satyastramasi—

Tramagne sarvabhutanamantarvasasi nityada
Saksivat punyapapesu satyam bruhikara vacah"

This were however was left out by Nannaya—

Again when gods approached ocean for churning i, the reason suggested that he too should have a share in the benefit, as he had to undergo the pain during the churning by the mountain Mandara—

" Apam pati rathovaca mamlpyamso bhavattatah,
Sudhasmi vipulam mandara bhramana diha

This two failed to be translated.

In the original we find the mention of the Barivansa and Bhavisyat purana, which is absent in the translation.

"Khilesu harivansasca bhavisyacca prakirtitam
Etatsakhilami khyatam Bharatam purva sangrahit

Lastly in the original Garuda was warned by Kasyapa not to disturb the sages Valakhilyas, which idea Nannaya did not translate.

"Putra musahasam karsih ma sadyo lapsyase vyadhim
Ma tram dahiyuh samkiuddtah valikhilya manicipah".

Now it is not out of Gritext to refer the same of the passages in the Andhra Mahabharata which did not have this counterparts in the original. They are purely the creations of Nannaya for instance the verses describing the greatness of Udanka—

"Painkaju bhava sanmibhu dagha
Painka ksa lanemaha tapassalilu dana
tanka murti paila sisyudu
damkundanu muni vanundu daddaya bhaktin"
Gurukula mumandu guruluku
Paundai jninamu badaseum
Garudayanani madikasta gunamulatadan"

Such addition of what was not in the original, added great charm since Udanka's feature attainments needed such glorification. In a similar situation. Nannaya composed a verse in praise of Garuda, just before his going to heaven

to bring the nector. This two seemes a similar purpose as the above one.

Ghanu paksanilacalita
Vaniruhamula adoragu vaupuspacayam
barimisa jayantha manigedu
vinuta sutamida buspa vrstiya bolen"

Vasuki was very much worried about the eolossal destruction of the serpents. The indifference of Adisesa in this connection annoyed him. Vajasa did not wish to depict the mental state of Vasuki while Nannaya did.

Ciramuga brahmakum dapamusesi yanantu danta dharuni
Bharagnu karya saktu duji Pannaga mukhyule Pathe
vasice ccera danayanta mundi madijerei taaampada
Yokkanidudu rbharatara damdasuka kule bhivi bhaya
pratighata kstyamul"

Thus Nannaya though is spoken of as a translator of the Sanskrit Mahabharata, had enjoyed the fact liberties of an independent writer, using his judicious direction whenever necessary.



THE *MAHABHARATA* AND THE PALI LITERATURE

(Their Affinity and Difference)

Binayendra Nath Chaudhury

Vyasa emphatically claimed that what is not found in the Mahabharata, cannot be traced elsewhere (yan netasti na tad kracid)¹ which is translated into Bengali as *Yaha nai Bharate taha nai Bharate*. Really speaking, the Mahabharata in its present form, is the largest epic of the world and a great repository of knowledge of diverse matters such as the story of the great battle of the Kauravas with their cousins the Pandavas as nucleus of the epic, life of the epic heroes, numerous akhyanas, myths and legends, large sections devoted to philosophy, ethics, cosmologies and genealogies and also fables and parables. So in point of form it is not a single book, but a whole literature and in point of time it extends over a few centuries.

In the present paper attempt has been made to find out how far the Mahabharata is connected with the Pali literature which originated and developed from the time of Gautama Buddha whose teachings are preserved in this vast literature containing collections of speeches, songs, narratives and rules of the Buddhist order classified into the Tripitaka, date of which approximately ranges between the

6th century and 4th century B.C. In the Tripitaka, the Jataka book may be considered first for the reason that it possesses the maximum references to myths and legends which are also contained in the Mahabharata. The Nimi Jataka (Fousbell ed. Vol. VI, p. 99) has mentioned the names of some ancient kings in a gatha :

Dudipe Sagare Selo Mucalindo Bhagiraso
Usinaro Atthako ca Assako ca Puthujjano
Ete ca anne ca rajano khattiya brahmana bahu.

and the Mahanaradakassapa Jataka (VI 251) mentions :

Yatha ahu Dhatarattho Vessamitto ca Atthako
Yamataggi Usinaro capi Sivi ca raja.

Among these and other kings of the Jataka book Sela may be identified with Sailalaya of the Mahabharata (XV.20.), Usinara with Ausinara (III. 130), Assaka with Asmaka (Adiparva. 179 : Asmaka nama rajarsi); Dhatarattha with Dhrtarastra, Vessamitta with Visvamitra, Yamataggi with Jamadagni, Sivi with Sivi, Mandhatu with Mandhatr (Dronaparva 62) and Cecca Upacara (Cetiya Jataka) is identified with Caidya Uparicara (Adi. 63).

The great philosopher king Janaka of Videha kingdom with its capital Mithila mentioned in the epics is identified with the king Mahajanaka II of the Mahajanaka Jataka (No. 539) which contains the famous verse uttered by the king :

Susukham vata jivama yesam no natthi kincanam
Mithilaya dayhamnaya na me kinci adayhatha.

i.e. "We, who have nothing of our own, may live without a care or sigh. Mithila's places may burn, but

naught of mine is burned thereby. The similar verses occurs also in the Santiparva : Mithilayam pradiptayam na me dayhati kincana (cf. Pali Dhammapada v. 200). Several jatakas mention the name of Koravya or Dalananjaya Koravya of the Yudhitthilagotta i.e. the family line of Yudhisthira who reigned at the city of Indapatta (Indraprastha) in the kingdom of Kuru. In the Mahabharata Dhananjaya is an ordinary epithet of Arjuna. In the Vidhurapandita Jataka Dhananjaya Koravya is remembered for his skill in the game of dice (jutavittaka), which qualification, according to the Epic, applies to Yudhisthira (Sabha parva. 59) also and in the Sambhava Jataka he is described as a pious, righteous and charitable king which is in compite agreement with the Great Epic. The reference of Yudhitthilagetta testifies to the fact that the Jatakas are familiar with the events that occured after the Great War, one of which was the inclusion of the Pandavas in the famous Kuru line (Ref. Pre Buddhist India, p 33). Vidhura Pandita, who is mentioned as almost inseparable companion of Dhananjaya Koravya and known as a minister, a teacher of law, morality and polity is identical with Vidura who is associated with Dhrtarastra (Adiparva. 63). In the gathas of the Vidhurapandita Jataka he is represented as a Kuru councillor holding the status of a noble of the royal family of the Kurus, though he was born of slave, thus agreeing with the Epic account (Adiparva. 63) : Sudrayonavaham jata).

As it is not possible to discuss all legends in detail some may be stated here. The episode of the king Sivi was so popular in anoient India that it was narrated thrice in the Mahabharata as well as in the Sivi Jataka. The Cariyapitaka and the Avadanasatakam of the Buddhist literature inculcating the doctrine of piety and self-sacrifice. According to the Jataka Sivi offered his two eyes to a brahmana who

begged for them, while the Epic in the Vanaparva relates that at the request of a Brahmana the king killed his son Vrhadgarbha, cooked flesh and offered it to the Brahmana: Again in the Tirthavatranarvadhyaya of the Vanaparva and in the Anusasanaparva it is stated that the king Sivi gave protection to a dove pursued by a hawk at whose demand the king began to cut his body and put flesh on the scale and at last he himself boarded the scale in order to give flesh equal in weight of the dove. Though the stories differ, a similarity is found that in each case the king has regained his normal condition as a result of his good deed.

The legend of Vasudeva Kanha (Krsna) and Kasma is related in the Ghata Jataka (No. 454). King Mahakamsa reigning at Asitanjana in the Kamsa kingdom, had two sons Kamsa and Upakamsa and a daughter Devagabbha (Devagarbha) at whose birt-time it was prophesised that the son, born of her, would destroy the Kamsavamsa along with the country, but due to affection the king could not put her to death. After the death of Mahakamsa, kamsa became the king and Upakamsa the viceroy and in fear of blame they also could not kill their sister but kept her in jail with two attendants Nandagopa and her husband Andhakavenhu. During that time Upasagara tue second son of the deceased king Mahasagar of Uttara Madhura (Mathura), left his country and came to his old friend Upakamsa. One day Upasagara met Devagabbha who fell in love with him and became pregnant. When the matter was disclosed Kamsa and Upakamsa married her to Upasagara with the decision that if she would give birth to a son the baby would be put to death but not a daughter. In course of time Devagabha bore ten son successively viz.

Vasudeva, Baladeva, Candadeva, Ghatapandita, etc. They all were managed to pass as Nandagopa's sons and

the ten daughters of the latter passed similarly as the daughters of Devagabbha. The boys grew big, strong and fierce and when Kamsa came to know their real identity, he made a plan to kill them. He invited Vasudeva and Baladeva to a wrestling fight in which Baladeva easily killed the two royal wrestlers Canura and Mitthika (Mustika) and Vasudev himself killed Kamsa and Upakamsa by throwing a wheel and became the king of the country. The ten brothers began the career of conquest. They captured Ayojjha (Ayodhya) and proceeded upto Dvaravati on the sea-coast and with the advice of their friend Kanhadipayana (Krsnadvaipayana), occupied Dvaravati and many other cities. After a few years the sons of the ten brothers procuring a young Lad dressed him like a pregnant lady, visited Kanhadipavana and cut joke with him who cursed instantly. This man on the 7th day from now will bring forth a knot of accacia wood (khadiraghatika) with which he will destroy the line of Vasudeva and this occured ultimately.

Leaving aside some statements of purely mythical charactor in the above account, we find a nucleus of a really historical tradition. Vasudeva of the Jataka is none but Lord Krsna of the Mahabharata. In the gatha also he is addressed as Kanha (Krsna) and Kesava (Kesava) and his name Vasudeva is significant. Devagabbha of the Jataka might be Debaki and the fact that Vasudeva had a brother named Baladeva is corroborated by other sources (Sabhaparva. 79) and other names seem to be inventions of laterday commentators, From the Jataka it is quite evident that Vasudeva Krsna is still a human being, a powerful warrior and a great king and has not yet become the Lord Krsna of the Bhagavata, which fact testifies to origin of the Jataka account.

The brief account about the Pandavas is found in the Kunala Jataka (No. 536) which relates that the princess Kanha (Krsna, Draupadi), when grown up, chose in the svayamvara assembly the five sons of Pandu (Pandu), namely Ajjuna (Arjuna) Nakula, Bhimasena, Yudhitthila (Yudhisthira) as her husbands and won their love and affection but sometime after, due to her strong passion, she fell in love with the hunchbacked slave. One day her unchasteness and depravity were discovered by the eldest brother Ajjuna whereupon the five brothers, in sheer disgust renounced the world to pass their remaining lives in the Himalayas. Here the Jataka account of Kanha's marriage with the five sons of Pandu agrees with that of the Mahabharata, but the two sources disagree in depicting Krsna's character who is magnificent and glorious in the whole of the Epic and later literature and there is not a slight hint of her unchastity as given in the Pali account. It is, perhaps, due to the fact that the compiler of the Jataka utilised the legend of Krsna, among other stories, as an instance of wickedness of women-kind and to show what a snare and danger every woman is to a man and how carefully he should protect himself against these temptresses.

There is a very close affinity between the Pali Jatakas and the Mahabharata in depicting the episode of Rsyasrnga (Pali Isisinga). The Alambusa Jataka relates that the Budhisatta having born in the Brahmin family adopted the ascetic life and lived in the hermitage in a forest. Now a certain doe (migi) residing there drank water mingled with the semen of the ascetic and became pregnant and in due course gave birth to a man-child who was named Isisinga. When the ascetic died, Isisinga lived alone as ascetic and practised so severe austerity that the power of his virtue shook the heavenly abode of Sakra (Indra) who fearing his rivalry, sent down a beautiful nymph Alambusa to tempt Isisinga

and destruct his virtue. Alambusa was successful. in her attempt and for three years Isisinga lay unconscious in her embrace. But at last, realiring his miserable condition, he gave up sensual pleasures and again developed austre meditation. Alambusa begged pardon and left.

In the Nalinika Jataka (No. 526) the episode of Isisinga from his birth to Sakra's fear is same. But here Sakra, in order to destroy Isisinga's virtue caused draught in Kasi. When the people under stress of famine complained to the king Brahmadatta, who at the suggestion of Sakra, sent his daughter Nalinika to seduce Isising. Accordingly she dressed in ascetic's garb arrived in the hermitage in absence of Isisinga's father. Pretending to have been wounded by a bear, she played on the simplicity of the uncunning young man and overcoming his virtue broke off his mystic meditation. Being delighted much Sakra caused rainfall in Kasi and Nalinika also left the hermitage. Isisinga's father, when returned, heard everything and admonished him.

The episode in the Mahabharata (Vanaparva. 93) is almost similar to those of the Jatakas. A doe, where also drank bathing water of the sage Bibhandaka and thus gave to Rsyasrnga who grew big in the lonely atmosphere of the hermitage. Now Lomapada, the king of Anga, oneday insulted his brahmin priests who left instantly. Indra, stopped rain in the kingdom and consequently famine occured. The king, after consultation with the ministers, sent harlots to bring Rayasrnga. In the absence of Bibhandaka a beautiful harlot appeared before the young sage who admirably addressed her : Rddhya bhavan jyotiriva prakasate manye caham tvambhivadaniyam. A similar statement is found in the Alambusa Jataka : Ka nu vijjurivabhasi osadhi viya taraka i. e. "Who art thou ! like to lightning flash, or bright

as moning star ? The harlot cheated the innocent Rsyasrnga with afterful talk, garlands and scents and at last left him in love-lorn condition. Bibhandaka seeing the son in distressed condition asked :

> Na kalpyate samidhah kinnu tatah
> kacciddhutancagni hotra tvayadya
> na vai yathapurvamivasi putra

It is similar to the expression in the Nalinika :

> Na te katthani bhinnai, na te udakam abhatam
> aggi pi te na hapito, kinnu mando va jhayasi.

i. e." No wood is cut no water fetched, no fire alight. I pray, Tell me, thou silly lad, why thus thou dreamst the livelong day" .

In the Mahabharata Rsyasrnga replied thus to Bibhadaka : Ihagato jatilo brahmacari na vai hrasvo natidirgha manasvi; In the Jataka also the expression is similar : Idhagama jatilo brahmacari, sudassaneyyo sutanuvinoti/na evatidigho na punatisesa. Other harlots brought Rsyasrnga to the palace Lomapada and then it rained. The king offered his daughter Santa to the sage who enjoyed her and when a child was born he returned to the hermitage.

Another common episode is the story of Kalmesapada (Pali-Kammasapada), the cannibal king in ancient India. According to the Mahasutasoma Jataka the king Brahmadatta was addicted to meat. Oneday his cook procured human flesh for the king who liked it and bagan to kill men for his food. His crime was discovered by the commander-in-chief and both were driven out. He lived in the forest with the cook eating all the travellers. He become notorious as cannibal (porisada). In the gathas he is addressed as

kammasapada. Then the king Sutasoma of Kuru, his former friend, went to the forest and subdued him.

The Mahabharata (Adiparva) also relates the story of king Kalmasapada, who became cannibal due to curse, murdered one hundred sons of Vasistha who subdued him by sprinkling holy water.

Besides the common episodes of historical tradition we find certain affinity between the Mahabharata and the Pali literature in matters of moral teaching and religious view of life. Just as in an episode of the Mahabharata (Arunyaka-parva) Yudhisthira answers the questions put by a Yaksa, thereby saved his brother lives, Similarly in the Pali Samyuttanikaya (I. p. 214) and in the Alavaka Sutta of the Suttanipata, Buddha satisfies Alavaka Yakkha by his answers to same pattern of questions. In reply to the last question Yudhisthira said : " Listen my dear Yaksa ! Neither birth nor Veda study, nor scholarship is the basis of Brahminship, but only a good way of life-there can be no doubt about that..................He who performs nothing more that the fire-sacrifice, but tames his senses. such a one Is considered to be a Brahmin." We find similar definitions of 'brahmana' frequently in the Pali texts such as the Vinayapitaka, Suttanipata and the Dhammapada, for instance :

Na jatahi na gottena na jacca hoti brahmano
Yamhi saccan ca dhammo ca so suci so ca brahmano.

The moral principle of ahimsa (non-violence) is always placed at the top of pancasila in Buddhism the Anusasanaparv of the Mahabharata also declares ahimsa to be the supreme duty (paramo dharmah. The theory of Karman, the act, which is theme of Buddhist doctrine constitutes the object of many stories of the Mahabharata.

Many verses of the Pali Dhammapada bearing Buddha's policy of peace, kindness and charity have parallels in the Mahabharata, for examples :

Dhammapada : Akkodhena jine khdham asadhum sadhuna jine,
Jine kadariyam danene saccena alikavadinam.
(Kodhavagga)

Mahabharata : Akrodhena jayet krodham asadhum sadhuna jayet,
Jayet kadaryam danena jayet satyena canrtam
(Udyogaparva 38, 73-74)

Dhammapada : Appamado amatapadam pamado maccuno padam
Appamatta na miyanti ye pamatta yathe mata
(Appamada vagga)

Mahabharata : Pramadam vai mrtyumaham bravimi
Tathapramadamamrtatvam bravimi.
(Udyogaparva. 42.4)

Dhammapada : Anikkasavo kasavam yo vattham paridahessati
apeto damasaccena na so kasavamarahati.
(Yamakavagga)

i. e. He who wishes to put on the yellow dress without having cleansed himself from sin, who disregards temperan is unworthy of yellow dress.

Mahabharata : Aniskasaye kasayam ihartham iti viddhi tam
Dharmadhvajanam mundanam vrttyartham iti me matih. (Santiparva. 568)

Dhammapada : Pupphani heva pacinantam vyasattamanasam naram
Suttam gamam mahoghova maccu adaya gacchati. (Pupphavagga)

Mahabharat : Puspaniva vicinvantam anyatragatamanasam
Suptam vyaghram mahaugho va mrtyur adaya gacchati. (Santiparva, 9939)

Many other similar parallels occur in the Pali texts and the Mahabharata comparative antiquity of which has not yet been determined, but it is true that they were drawn from the inexaustible source of Indian gnomic wisdom (vide M. Winteranitze-History of Indian Literature. Vol. II. p. 84).

O

ANGIRAS IN THE *MAHABHARATA*

V. S. Sukthankar

Angiras is a seer of pre-historic age. He is closely connected with the cult of sacrifice. He is often referred to as the descendant of Vedic seers, has played significant role in the Rgveda together with his descendants and is held in high esteem. But the *Mahabharata*, records his significant role in various stages of society and tries to place a ful-fledged character of Angiras.

In order to trace different aspects of his character in the *Mahabharata* we have to examine them in their proper perspective. Let us first of all start with the birth of Angiras in the *Mahabharata*.

The birth of Angiras

While relating the achievements of Brahma (*Pitamahasya vrttam*), the *Mahabharata* (*Anusasana parvan 85*) tries to depict the birth of Angiras in the following manner.

In days of yore, Mahadeva in the form of Varuna performed a sacrifice. All the sacrificial limbs along with the vedas etc., in their embodied form joined with Mahadeva. Other gods with their consorts and daughters attended it. While offering oblations in the fire, Brahma witnessed the

beautiful damsels of heaven and became passoinate. So his seed (*retas*) fell down on the earth. Pusan collected the seed of Brahma soiled with the dust from the ground and cast it into the sacrificial fire. The fire blazed forth. Brahma as Hotr continued to pour libation on the fire. Again he was excited with passion and his seed came out. As soon as the seed came out for the second time Brahma took it up with the sacrificial ladle and poured it as like libation of ghee with the necessary mantras on the burning fire. As a consequence of this, the three qualities, viz, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas were born. From these three elements different creatures sprang up. Out of that seed thrown into the sacrificial fire by Brahma, three male persons came out. One who arose from the flames of fire was called Bhrgu, another came out of the burning charcoals (*angara*), was named as Angiras. The third originated from the extinguished charcoal and was called Kavi.

Bhrgityeva Bhrguh purvamangarebhyo' ngirabhavat 15b
angarasamsreyaccaiva kavirityaparo' bhavat 16a

Subsequently the sages like Marici, etc., the good like Asvins etc., the gold complexioned deities, the Varun and the twelve Adityas originated from the same sacrifice.

Quarrel started between Mahadeva, Agni and Brahma for the possession of the products of sacrificer. Mahadeva in the form of Varuna tried to convince them as the sacrifice was performed by him, the three sons born out of the sacrifice would belong to him. Then Agni emphatically pleaded that as the three sons originated from his limbs (flames etc.) they must be accepted as his offspring. Last of all Brahma put forth the most convincing argument that the children would belong to the person out of whose retas they are born. Hence the three sons born out of the retas of Brahma

should belong to him. While they are quarrelling between themselves, the gods approached Pitamaha (Brahma) to bring out a solution. As Brahma Mahadeva in the from of Varuna and Agni cooperated in the sacrifice, the product of sacrific should belong to them. As a consequence, Varuna got Bhrgu as his share, Angiras went to Agni *Isvarongirasam cagnerapatyarthebhyakalpayat* and Kavi continued as the son of Brahma. These three sons became Prajapatis (creators) and were responsible for creation of progeny.

Angiras begot eight sons. They are also known as Varunas. Their names are Brhaspati, Utathya, Vayespa, Santi, Ghora, Virupa, Samvarta and Sudhanva.

Another tradition (*Mbh.* 1.59.10-11; and 60.4) of the birth ot Angiras differs from the earlier one. Instead of including Angiras among the products of sacrifice, the present tradition Includes him among the six mind-borns sons of Brahma Others are Marici, Atri, Pulaha and Kratu. Angirass is also sometimes included among the seven manasaputra of Brahman (*Mbh* 12. 200. 17). These seven celebrated sages are called the seven Prakrtis of Narayana by which entire world is supported (*Mbh.* 12.322.27)

In the earlier version Angiras is born of Brahma's seed from the sacrifice of Varuna. But in the present story he is related to the mind-born son of Brahma. Thus it gives a clear idea about his relation with Brahma as his son

Angiras and Agni

Another account of the *Mahabharata* (*Aranyaka Parvan*, 207) speaks of Angiras as the adopted son of Agni.

Here Markandeya relates Yudhisthira how the adorable Angiras transforms himself into the fire-god destroyed the darkness and distressed the world with scorching rays thus :

In olden times Angiras performed penance in his hermitage so much that he excelled Agni. Agni, thinking that Brahman had created another new fire, was greatly depressed by Angiras's effulgence and could not know what to do. Then Angiras informed the fire-god that Agni was created by Brahman to serve as the sacrificial fire and therefore asked him (Agni) to function accordingly. The fire-god then resented for his misdeed and wished to be only second to Angiras or to be *Prajapatyak* fire. At last Angiras prevailed upon him to retain his former position and make him (Angiras) his first child.

Thus Angiras is well-known as the son of Agni.

Angiras and Brahma

We come across various legends in the *Mahabharata* where Angiras played different roles. He is sometimes to have been honoured by the gods and at times adored by human beings. In the *Mahabharata* Angiras is also associated with Brahma.

It is said that those who earn merit through asceticism are allowed to visit the assembly hall of Brahma. Like the gods and demi-gods the sage Angiras along with Daksa, Prachetan, Pulaha, Marici, Kasyapa, Atri, Vasistha, Gautama, the Prajapatis attend the assembly hall of Brahma. This privilege speaks of his superiority in ascetic power over others (*Mbh.* 2. 11).

Angiras and Skanda Karttikeya

Once the gods were oppressed by a demon Tarakasura.

They were assured of his death in the hands of the son born of Siva and Parvati. The union of Siva and Parvati was brought out. As a result Skanda was born. Gods were consoled. They wanted to coronate Karttikeya as the commander-in-chief of the divine army for the impending battle with Tarakasura. All sorts of arrangments were made for the coronation proper. All gods, demi-gods, Maharsis and the natural objects personified assembled on that occasion.

During the coronation ceremony of Karttikeya, Brhaspati poured libations on the sacrificial fire. Himavat gave a sit to Karttikeya which was decorated with costly gems. The gods brought all kinds of necessary auspicious articles with due rites accompanied by the recitation of mantras. Among the Rsis who were present in the ceremony and took active part in it include Angiras, Bhrgu, Pulastya, Atri, Marici, Kratu, Manu, Prachetas, Kaksa. Thus the role of Angiras as an important seer is clear. (*Mbh*. 9.44.9)

Angiras and Bhisma

The encounter of Bhisma with the Pandavas leading to his ultimate defeat is related in the *Bhismaparvan* of the *Mahabharata* (6.14). On the last day of his battle, in course of fighting, he was pierced by the arrows of Arjuna and fell down on the ground unconscious. Later on he got back his senses. Then the sun was in the southern dedension (*daksinayana*). As it is believed that one would take rebirth if one dies when the sun is in the southern, Bhisma resolved to wait till the sun reaches the northern solstice. So he reclined on a bed of arrows prepared by Arjuna and was waiting for that auspicious period. While lying on the bed of arrows, many virtuous and wise people visited him. Yudhistira accompanied with his brothers also came there and besought his advice. During that period Angiras with

other great Rsis went to see Bhisma the foremost one of Bharata's race. (*Mbh.* 13,27, 3-8)

Angiras and Agastya

The story of Indra's theft of lotus stalk collected from Brahmasara by Agastya runs thus :

Once the Rsis resolved to visit all the sacred Tirthas on the earth. In their pilgrimage Angiras accompanied other sages, placing Indra at their head visited all the Tirthas one after and at last reached the sacred Tirtha, Brahmasara. All took their ablution in that lake. Some of them extracted the stalks of the lotus only. Others collected the stalks and consumed them. But Agastya extracted them and kept them on the shore. When Agastya completed his purificatory rites and returned to the shore, he found those stalks missing. Naturally he suspected that some one among his companions must have stolen the stalks. He was annoyed for this unseemly behaviour of the Rsis One after another the Rsis promised on oath and tried to impress upon others the virtue of an ideal Brahmin. When the term of Angiras came he said "Let him who has stolen they stalks be allways impure. Let him be a censurable Brahmin (for his misdeeds). Let him leash hounds. Let his be guilty of Brahmanicide. Let him be averse to expiations after having committed transgressions".

Thus Angiras tried to convince that he was a true Brahmin. In similar tone all the sages swore their innocence. When Indra's term came, he said that let the man who had stolen the stalks be endowed with all sorts of Virtues. Agastya accept d Indra as the real offender and asked him tc return the stalks. Indra immediately complied with

Agastya's demand and said that he had done the mischief with some motive behind, because he thought that such an act would generate a learned discourse among the sages and he would enjoy this. (*Mbh.* 13. 96)

All these occurences lead us to the conclusion that Angiras is quite prominent among the Maharsis. He was believed to have acquired the merit through his austerities and was mobile in nature, He used to move from heaven to earth. Since he had achieved a remarkable degree of ascetic power, whenever he desired for anything it was immediately fulfilled. Any hurdle in the fulfilment of his wish was immediately removed with the help of his spiritual power either in the form of pronouncing curse or blessings as the case may be.

Angiras and Dharmaniti

Besides the diverse branches of knowledge Angiras first of all accepted the eternal religion, promulgated by Brahma from the very beginning of creation along with gods and other sages (*Mbh.* 12. 160. 23). On another occasion during Brahma's sacrifice, Mahadeva made over the righteous rod (*Dharmasya danda*), the protector of righteousness unto Visnu. Visnu gave that to Angiras and handed it over to Indra and Marici Marici gave it to Bhrgu. Then Bhrgu gave that rod unto other Rsis (*Mbh.* 12 122. 38).

Thus it is clear that Angiras is not only responsible for the promotion of fire-sacrifice, but also he is credited with the knowledge of the science of politics dharmaniti. Subsequently it was accepted by other sages.

Angiras and Tirthayatra

Along with the *dharmaniti* Angiras is credited with doctrine of *Tirthayatra*. Bhisma quotes a dialogue between Angiras and Gautama (*Angira-Gautama samvada*) (*Mbh.* 13. 26), known as *Tirthaprasamsa.*

Once Gautama asked Angiras regarding the merits attaching to sacred waters and what merits are earned by a person in respect of the next world by bathing in the sacred waters on earth. On this context Angiras explained Gautama the merit secured by a man by visiting the holy places. He gives a long list of holy places, bathing in which, brings the fruit of the performance of various sacrifices, such as Asvamedha, Agnistoma and Sarvayajna. He advises the observance of fast in addition to the bath in these holy places. All these he advocates to get rid of the sin and to put an end to this worldly existence. He further advocates this as a means of securing heaven the world of eternal Brahman. If it is not possible to visit these holy places physically a man should visit them mentally. This is one of the greatest secret doctrine of Angiras.

It appears that a visitor to these places not only gets the satisfaction of bathing but also the fruits of various sacrifices which are very difficult to be within the reach of an ordinary man. It is only because of Angiras's effort such an easy substitute to sacrifice was introduced by propagating the doctrine of *Tirthayatra*.

Angiras and Upavasavidhi

Another important doctrine with which Angiras is credited in the doctrine of fasting. Here he points out Bhisma about various virtues of fasting as compared with

sacrifices. According to him fasting is an easy and self dependant means of getting good results than the sacrifices. The attempts were orten made to provide an easy substitute for the poor and those who have or means to achieve their goal without any trouble, So Angiras points out fasting as an excellent penance. The sages like Cyavana, Vasistha, Jamadagni, Gautama, Bhrgu secured the highest bliss by fasting and Visvamitra secured brahminhood through it. This may be one of the greatest contribution of Angiras for social and religious change during his period.

Angiras as a Gotrakarin

Angiras leads a glorious family of seers in the Rgveda and from him the line of his descendants sprang up as Angiras. He is equally known as a *gotrakarin*.

The custom of tracing one's discendants through the male ancestor appears to be at the root of the concept of *gotra*. Panini defines gotra as (IV 162) *apatyam pautra prabhrti gotram*. But this definition has undergone some changes during the *Baudhayana Srautasutra* which lays that the offspring of the eight Rsis like Visvamitra, Jamadagni, Bharadvaja, Gautama, Atri, Vasistha and Kasyapa are included in *gotra*. The sons and grandsons of previous and succeeding generations of *Mantrakrt*, Rsi form a *gotra* were introduced according to the names of certain Rsis, and these Rsis became *gotrakarins*. It seems that the Aryan Brahmins loved their ancestors and wanted to perpetuate their names through such system.

Apart from these eight Rsis other two Rsis namely Angiras and Bhrgu were included later and they also attained the position of *gotrakarin.*

But according to the *Mahabharata* (12, 285, 7) there are only four principal *gotra*-Angira, Kasyapa, Vasistha and Bhrgu.

mulagotrani catvari samutparnnani parthiva
Angirah Kasyapascaiva Vasistho Bhrgureva ca

This means that originally there were four stocks of Aryan families where Angiras is considered as a *gotrakarin* and the promoter of the original *gotra.* Subsequently it developed into eight. Angiras was substituted by his son and grandson Bharadvaja and Gautama, Bhrgu by his son Jamadagni, Visvamitra, Atri and Agastya were newly added and Kasyapa and Vasistha remained as before.

Gretness of Angiras

From all these accounts it is clear that Angiras is closely related to most of the important personalities and events of the story of the Mahabharata. In the legend of *Pavan Arjuna Samvada* of the Mahabharata (13. 138) Bhisma points out the glories of Brahmins as taught by Pavana, the wind-god to Arjuna.

He narrates once Angiras who is mentioned as the greatest among the Brahmins by means of his lusture, drank up all the waters. After drinking the whole water as if it were milk, his thirst was not quenched. He, therefore, once more filled the earth with water by raising a mighty wave. When Angiras became angry with the wind-god, he himself was afraid of him and for a long time through the fear of Angiras remained in the Agnihotra of Brahmin.

Similarily Panam also stated how Agni formerly was having golden flames without smoke and had flames united together rising upwards. It is because of the curse of Angiras he was devoid of all virtues.

Another version of *Mahabharata* (13, 151. 31) depicts that Angiras was blessed with so much ascetic merit and success that one is belived to exonerate his sin by reciting the name of Angiras.

Thus the brief account of the *Mahabharata* (14. 4. 22) clearly illustrates Angiras as a fire-priest, leader of Brahmins, thinkers, politician, teacher and enthusiastic religious reformer. He is shown himself as the pillar of Dharma, who felt the necessity of providing such easy substitutes such Tirthayatra under new form for those time honoured and difficult performance of vedic sacrifice.

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WOMEN IN THE *MAHABHARATA*

Sabitri Rout

Even in the industrial age of tremendous scientific progress and mechanical triumph like our own—the human mind turns with fond interest to any picture which shows how men in the past lived and thought, and it listens eagerly to any song which echoes through the buried years of vanished generations.

Across the ruin-strewn plain, towards the lordy minarets of modern Delhi, the spectator notes, just a little toward the east, the ruins of the traditional Indraprastha, which once enjoyed a glorious past, almost five centuries before Christ and wherefrom emerged the great epic *Mahabharata* which can as well be called the Fifth Veda. The *Mahabharata* covers the range of a whole literature rather than continuing itself to a single homogeneous work like the *Ramayana*. No other single work gives an insight in to the innermost depths of the soul of the people of ancient India other than the *Mahabharata*.

The composer of the *Mahabharata* is said to be Veda-Vyasa. In the "Geeta Dyanam" it has been said :

'Obeisence to thee Oh ! Vyasa of high intellect, whose eyes are like the petals of a blooming lotus and by whom the lamp of knowledge has been enkindled being filled with the oil of the *Mahabharata*"

The present text of the *Mahabharata* passing through stages of Jaya and Bharata has finally developed into a compilation of 'hundred thousand stanzas' and has been divided into eighteen Parvas.

The data of the *Mahabharata* is evidently a fixed and permanent landmark of all chronological calculationg of ancient Indian history.

In the annals of the *Mahabharata*, the very high standard of learning, culture and all-round progress reached by Indian women is too well-known, a fact. From among the galaxy of women, there were 'Brahmavadini' or the women of scholastic attitude as well as domesticated women who lived dedicated lives at home. The erudite scholar Sulabha had a life of asceticism and devoted herself to spiritual pursuit. Bramhani the daughter of Sandilya and also Siva professed celibacy for the practice of austerity, learning and scholarship instead of embracing the life of housewives.

There were housewives also who were simultaneously reputed scholars and of saintly character, leading an excell-ent had composite life of wifehood and motherhood. Gandhari, the wife of Dhriarastra, blindfolded herself in sympathy with her blind husband; But in points of contro-versy, when her husband supported a wrong cause, she never failed to show him the right path by putting forth strong and correct arguments. She requested him not to have any connection with his sinful and agreesive sons and herself blessed them with the famous utterance.

"Let there be the victory for the righteous". Similarly Vidula, a Lady of high spirit, reproached her son Sanjaya who was dejected and numbed down after being defeated in a battle with a certain king. She said".

" It is better to flare up for a moment than to emit smoke for a long time".

It seems in her maiden days. the princess Kunti had pleased a rishi by her attentions, and he had taught her a mantra, by the repetion of which she could cause any celestial being she thought of to present himself to her and be obedient to her will, whether he liked it or not. Just to test the validity of the mantra out of sheer fun, Kunti invoked the Sun-God and consequently had by him named Karna. Being young physically and emotionally, the worst sort of humiliation had come to Kunti, but she was determined to bear the tragedy and grew up in to a beautiful adult woman with grace, poise and personality. In the "Swoyambara Sabha" she was attracted by the appearance of the handsome prince Pandu and with quivering emotions placed the nuptial garland around his neck. They were married then and became man and wife. She had three celebrated sons named Yudhistira, Bhima and Arjuna.

Draupadi, the daughter of the King of Panchala, is one of the most colourful characters of the *Mahabharata*. She was beautiful like a blue lotus, and on account of her dark complexion was known as Krishna. Draupadi was no ordinary princess, but had sprung in to existence, mature and beautiful from the midst of a great sacrifice for offspring offered by her father Drupada, Hence, the other name of Draupadi is Yajnaseni.

Draupadi being the most lovely woman at that time, her "Swoyambara" attracted chief and princes of all nations, and not only chiefs and princes but also Bramhans in crowds presented themselves there to graciously accept the presents which might be offered on the auspicious occasion.

The condition of the " Swoymbars " was that each competitor should be provided with a particular bow and five arrows. If the competitor would succeed in discharging an arrow through the revolving " chakra " and thereby can strike the eye of the golden fish behind it, Draupadi would be betrothed to him in marriage.

The sight of the beautiful Draupadi fired the ardour of the assembled princes as her prospective suitors. When all the Kshatriya princes had returned after futile trials for piercing the eye of the golden fish, Arjuna who was in exile and was present there in the guise of a Brahmin rose up and advanced from his seat from amongst the Brahmins, Soon after, amidst a great deal of glamour, Arjuna strang the bow and with unerring skill, shot the mark. Gods from heaven showered flowers upon the victorious hero Arjuna appearing there in the disguise of a Brahmin.

At last after the winning of Draupadi by Arjuna, the Pandava brothers returned to their mother Kunti and declared in loud voice from outside that they have brought the alms. Mother Kunti who was inside her room, could not see the brothers along with Draupadi and hastily replied saying- "Enjoy what you have obtained".

However, Draupadi was fated to have five husbands for in a previous existence on the earth, she had on five different occasions, asked the Gods for a good husband as a reward for the austerities she had practised for pleasing the Gods. Yudhistira, the eldest brother of the Pandavas, knew this secret which he revealed and explained to all the brothers. Hence the verdict of their mother Kunti was accepted unequivocally.

After the departure of Draupadi along with the five brothers, Drupada, the King of Panchala on enquiry was able to discover the true identity of the five pandava brothers and their mother Kunti. They were brought back to the kingdom of Panchala and Draupadi was betrothed in ceremonial marriage.

Time rolled on and one year passed off. The Pandavas then decided to return to their own kingdom along with Draupadi and mother Kunti. On their return they were not welcomed by the Kauravas, for they were very much disappointed for not being able to injure their rivals, the Pandavas, by any fair means. Hence, they hatched out a clever plot. Yudhistira was invited to play a gambling match of dice with the intention of winning over him by trick of play. As a Kshatriya, Yudhistira could not decline the dice match and he sat down to play with Sakuni, the cunning brother of queen Gandhari.

In a succession of games, Yudhistira lost everything. Lastly he had to stake Draupadi. when he had love her too, She was dragged to the gambling hall by her hair by wicked Dushasana. In face of gross indignities the Pandavas were dumbfounded. At last Bhima rose up by the piercing word of appeal from Draupadi.

In the Virata Parva of the *Mahabharata*, in the exciting and most sensational scene of gambling, as Sri Aurobindo put it " The whole personality of Draupadi breaks out in that cry, her chastity, her passionate and unforgiving temper, but it flashes out, not in an expression of pure feeling, but in fiery and pregnant apophthegm".

The note of Sanskrit plays is always aristocratic, it has no answer to the democratic feelings or to the modern sentimental cult of the average man, but deals with exalted, large and aspiring natures whose pride it is that they do not act like common men. They are the great spirits, whose footsteps they would follow.

The story of Nala and Damayanti-both romantic and tragic and many other such episodes are there in the *Mahabharata* which speak of the high dignity and status of women in that age.

Whatever may be the ideals of ancient Indian womanhood, the present Indian women are in the cross-roads of civilisation. The overwhelming influence of western culture is fast spreading its spell. There is a struggle between men and women for establishing the supremacy of one over the other giving rise to the "Women's Lib" movements. This situation has not arisen out of one factor. A million factors have joined together to create the situation.

In the words of Dr. (Mrs) Rama Choudhury, the former Vice-Coancellor of Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta—

'Even during the turbulent modern age of over-materialism, over-realism, over-individualism, over rationalism and above all over cynicism, we find clear proofs that the immortal ideals of Indian womanhood are still there, inspiring and heartening thousands of women in all walks of life'.. Hence, for ideas and ideals, it is imperative that the modern generation should turn to the *Mahabharata* over and again.

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IMPACT OF THE *MAHABHARATA* ON MAITHILI LITERATURE

Jayakanta Mishra

Before diseussing the details of some of the works where the *Mahabharata* seems to have influenced the growth and devolopment of Maithili literature, it is necessary to bring to your notice the traditional belief in the Maithili speaking areas that one should never read or recite the *Mahabharata* complete, as thereby one is sure to invite some calamity or disaster. This belief only embodies the sentiments of a people who felt deeply that the kind of unjust civil war which formed the basis of this great works is somthing which could not be praised or imbibed. Secondly one would feel that the recital at length of a story which involved the killing of warriors of the land on such a large scale could not but be inauspicious.

These observation have been made in the background of the greatest attachment in Mithila to the culture of the Puranas. A simple recital of the eighteen Puranas is considered an act of the highest piety which brings auspicious results Vidyapati Thakur copied out the entire *Bhagawata* and perhaps recited it for twelve long years to the Queen of his illustrious patron Maharaja Shiva Singh. (It is rather pertainent to point out that my father performed the recital of the eighteen Puranas as a Mahayajana which bring the fruits equal to the performance of several *ashuwamedha* sacrifices.) Traditionally the recital of a large number of prayers and isolated parts of the *Mahabharata*, such as the

Gita and the *Vishnu—Sthasranama—Siotra,* has been considered as most auspicious.

Moreover, the 'Vanaparva' describes some very instructive stories from Mithila. These are the stories of the sage Kaushika's visit to a 'Pativrata' (a body most devoted and obedient to her husband) and to a 'dharmavyadha' (a righteous butcher). These stories tell us how one could attain peace and achieve the highest spiritual knowledge by simply following one'a duties. All this shows the lines along which the contents of the *Mahabharata* were likely to appeal to the people of Mithila.

Anyway, it appears that it was this superstition attached to the fecital of the complete *Mahabhurata* that up this day in Maithili there have been no translation of the complete epic, only summarised versions of the complete work are available and only parts of it in translation at a time.

Such summaries are written in prose as well as in poetry. The most lucid and straightforward work which narrates the *Mahabharata* story in full in prose is Ramananda Thakur's *Sankshipta — Mahabharata — sara* (1920). In verse the best of such works was written in the Nineteenth Century by one Vaidyanatha. He called it *Bhasha—Camatkara.* He however, made his work bulky by adding stories from the 'Puranas'. It is a pity that it has not yet been published.

Parts of the *Mahabharata* have been more numerous. In prose the best work is Gananatha Jha's *Adi-Parva,* of which the Manuscript is still preserved in the Ganganath Jha Sanskrit Vidyapitha at Allahabad. Among the other important prose translations may be mentioned *Nalopakhyana, Yaksha-Pandava-Samvada* etc. by the late Mahamahopa-

dhya Dr. Umeah Mishra, *Anushasanaparva* by Anup Mishra and *Adiparva, Vanaparva, Sabhaparva* and *Virataparva* by Gunavantalaladasa.

In verse also some excellent translations have been made. Gangadasa translated *Virata-Parva,* Acyutananda Datta *Karna-Parva* and *Shanti-Parva,* Tantranatha Jha *Adi-Parva,* and Ramapati Choudhuri parts of *Shantiparva.* Of these, Tantravatha Jha's work has been recently re-issued in an excellent edition and deserves a high place in the Twentieth Century translations.

More fruitful results of the impact of the *Mahabharata* are to be traced in creative literature inspired by it rather than in translation. The earliest important work in Mithili that can be called creative was the drama *Mahabharatā.* It was written in 1702 A.D. by one Krishnadasa and staged under the patronage of the Nepalese king Bhupatindramalla., who ruled over from 1695 to 1721. It is divided into 23 Acts and gives all the important episode, of the main story. It is a remarkable work in which lines of poetry are coloured by dance and drama in the form of a kind of opera. The most touching scene is the last one which describes the lamentations of Dhritarashtra.

In later times among such works the important centributions are : full length dramas or the story of Nala (such as *Nalodaya* by Govinda, and another play on Nala by Devendra), one-act play on Karna (such as by Dr. Kashinatha Jha's 'Kirana') and Ekalavya, moral essays (such as Jyotishi Baladeva Mishra known as *Bharata-Shiksha*) .and excellent short stories (such as, Rajastwar Jha's *Dharmavyadhakatha*).

But perhaps there are no better literary works in Mithili which have been inspired by the *Mahabharata* then three

great epics : *Subhadraharana* (1937/44), *Kichaka-badha* (1938/1562/1976) and *Dharmaraja-Yudhishthira* (1973).

Subhadraharana, is written by Raghunandanadas (1860-1945) in 13 Cantos. Its canvas is large, its style fluent and descriptions of the seasons and scenery ennobling. The plot is obviously based on the Adi-Parva. The hero is Arjuna who fulfils all the criteria of an epic hero. Every canto begins with the word 'Shri' and ends with the word 'Krishna', very much like the Sanskrit epics *Shishupalabadha* and *Kiratarjunayan*. It is adorned with all the figures of speech and varieties of versification, shythm and style befitting a conventional epic. One particularly recalls the vivid scenes where Subhadra (the heroine) is shown eventually as a Grihalakshmi (domestic wife).

"For a daughter-in-law the home of the father-in-law is like a new birthplace. She has to leave the way of her father's family and adopt herself to the life of the husband's family. She has to walk, speak and go about with care and accustom herself to the various household duties. She may not go astray from the path of duty, speak not anything undesirably be respectful to all. She has to live a life like that of the tongue in between thirty-two teeth in the mouth, so that even while getting the pressure and pains of the teeth one has to live in between them. Thus, she has to bear the harsh words of the family people and keep herself active hopefully. Thus with contant love and affection she has to make her abode in the house of her husband Like a river or a waterfall she has to constantly satisfy the thirst of one and all, like Annapurna she has to give away food to the hungry. She has to nurse with attention to all those who need her services in sickness and disease. She has to make a strong effort to redress the grievances of all in pain and strife, sympathire with the needy and rhe weak. She has to

to act like the far for men who have come from under parched heat of the sun. For the distressed one she has to have the softest words, and for the inimical she has to be like the Goddess Chandi. Always she has to keep an open heart, full of sweet words. In a word she has to become verily a Lakshmi for the good of the household.

The comparison of a daughter-in-law living in an average Indian joint family with the tongue in between the thirty two teeth of the mouth is indeed unique in imagination and poetic skill when distinguishes this work : thus a common plan Mahabharata episode has been turned into great and good poetry.

Let us now see the *Kichaka-badha*, It is written in 10 Cantos by Professor Tantranatha Jha (1909-1984) It is not only unique in that it was a continuous experiment in writing Blank Verse but also in the elerated and powerful treatment of the central character—Draupadi in the Fourth Canto ! He describes the feeling that sway the mind of Draupadi when she is asked to fetch wine from the room of Kichaka. She recalls her glorious home, her Swaymvara, her days in the company of Arjuna, her survival of the ordeal presented by Professor Tantanatha Jha's translation of Adi-parva has been recently published with an exallent introduction on the *Mahabharata* by Pandit Surendra Jha 'Suman' It amply proves how the *Mahabharata* has acted as a feeder to the Maithili poets.

In the epic style of *Kichaka-badha* there is an unmistakable impact of the *Mahabharata* Thus is no hurrying over moods and emotions and the poem marches in a lofty and grave style—each possible turn of the thought is explored and yet briefly and imaginatively conceved The *Kichaka-badha* is one of the glories of Maithili literature.

The other epic is *Dharmaraja Yudhisthira* by Lakshman Shastri. This epic keeps very close to the *Mahabharata* story of Yudhishthira as a hero. Yet it has moments of imaginative re-creation.

But this epic is not very impressive on the whole. The poetic powers of Lakshman Shastri are not great. His work is improved by the *Mahabharata*; but his power could not reach the heights required for successfully carrying out his proglet.

It only proves that the native genius and the native powers of a poet in writing and conceiving great poetry are necessary. For receiving great poetry, it is not enough to be inspired by the 'great-Bharata.'

The *Mahabharata* has culturally in a brood way provided the poetic ethos and cultural background of much great poetry and prose in Maithili, but it is rather the Purana and the Itihasa as a whole which include the *Ramayana* that has sustained it. Moreover, it must be the native genius of the writers which is expected to ripen and mature any material : from the *Mahabharata* or from some other source into great poetry.

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THE *RADHA CAKRA* OF SARALA DASA— AN ARTISTIC APPRAISAL

Raj Kishore Mishra

The present paper is a comparative study of Draupadi's swayamvar as reflected in the original Mahabharat and Sarala Das's treatment of it in the light of the Jain Harivamsa. The scenario takes us back to Arjun's spectacular victory in the assembly of Indian princes where he exhibited his unprecedented skill of archery by eclipsing veteran princes and kings of India. A brahmin in disguise as he was then, won the stake and courted Draupadi as his wife. The discussion that follows now is an analysis of an article entitled 'Radha Cakra' written by late Pandit Banambar Acharya in Oriya published in the Sarala Smaranika in 1954.

In the Adi Parva of the Mahabharat in chapter 184 we hear about Drupada's design. The queer target was designed to spot Arjun. It reads :

Sonveshamanah Kaunteyam Panchalya Janamejaya
Drudham dhanurananamyam Karayamasa bharata
Yantram Vihayasam Capi Karayamasa Krutrimam
Tena Yantrena samitam raja lakshyam cakara sah.

It was a queer device. The bow was unusually strong An artificial circular device was placed above with a tiny hole in it. The archer was required to shoot at the target through the hole of the moving wheel. Sarala Das grasped this pageant in a more exciting way :

Radha Chakra bulai ye sahasreka dhara
Kanaka matsya achai tamhira upara
Kurala cakra praye bulai anuvrate
Tale dhanu e achi laksha bala yukate
Lakshe bala dhanu dhari se patare uthi
tamhi tale achi tirtha jala ghata goti
tamhi drusti dei uparaku kari musti
cakravedi matsya bama cakshu yiba phuti
E heneka swarupe yehu lakha bindhiba
E mohara duhita Draupadiku bibha heba.

Sarala termed this exercise as Radha Cakra. The whirling wheel with thousand spikes is Radha Cakra. There is a golden fish fixed to a rotating device on it It is in constant rotation like that of a potter's earthen wheel. Down below there is a receptacle filled in holy water. The archer has to climb upon a wooden plank in the improvised scaffold while holding the gigantic bow in his hand. He would lift the bow high above his hand and would look into the reflection of the golden fish on the water below. When the fish is glassed in water the archer would release his arrow so that it would hit the left eye of the fish. A riddle some gymnastic indeed !

Nilakantha's commentary on the original Mahabharat, of course; adds explanatory details but in the hands of Sarala as noted above, it receives a visual treat. Nilakantha while explaining the 'Vihayasa yantram' mentions :

Vaihayasam antarikshagatam yantram tibra—
Veqabattayabhramanena Lakshyamargasamkocaka—
Mantraraviddham.

It speaks of the wheel which rotates in great speed,
He ofcourse doesnot call it Radha Cakra,

How come then Sarala brands it as Radha Cakra ? Pandit Acharya has tried to show that Sarala was probably

influenced by the Jain text of Harivamsa. In the lexical text Haimakosha the term Radha refers to :

Radha Vidyut Visakhayoh Vishnukrantamalakyosca
gopi Vedhya Viseshayoh.

The last synonym 'Vedhya Viseshah' means a target or an arrow-mark. The Jain Harivamsa (ch. 45, Verse 128) says :

Canda gandiva kodanda mandali karana kshyamah
Radha vedhasamartho yo draupadyah sa bhavet patih.

He who can hit the Radha vedha will be the consort of Draupadi. In verse 124

dakshinyabhangabhitena Drupadena tato nrupah
Bisve candravedhartha mahutah kanyakarthinah.

There is a reference to one 'Candraka Vedha' in this verse which indirectly refers to the moon-shaped 'Radha vedha' or Radha Cakra,

In Vyasa's account we get 'yantra' & 'Lakshya'. The Jain text does not however refer to any 'yantra' or any such auto-revolving device. It directly refers to the position the archer will take while shooting at the aim :

bhramaccakra samarudho banam samdhiutya dakshinah
lakshyam candraka vedhakhyam vivyatha nrupasannidhau.

Arjun climbing on the revolving wheel shot at the 'Candraka'. These accounts show that Sarala Dasa has very successfully amalgamated the divergent situations into one composite whole. In the Sanskrit Mahabharat Arjun shot at the arrow while standing on the ground below where as according to the Jaina Harivamsa he had to ascend the revolving wheel. It coincides with Sarala's where he refers to Arjuna's ascending the revolving wooden plank, This

shows that Sarala has also used the term 'Radha' as it was current in the folk tale modelled after the Jaina Harivamsa account. Had he been acquainted with the text proper, he would not have prefixed the word 'Radha' to 'Cakra' to make it 'Radha Cakra', he would have definitely used the word 'Radha' in the sense of 'Lakshya' or target.

The Radha Cakra also evokes a curious parallelism. Draupadi is Krishna. The 'Sudarsana Cakra' is the most effective weapon of Sri Krishna. Draupadi alias Krishna, a dedicated devotee of Sri Krishna needs glam or ous pageanty at the time of her marriage. Did Sarala manoeuvre the 'Radha Cakra' episode with some delicious mischief ? Though it may appear quite extraneous it is quite interesting to observe that the Radha Cakra emblematic of Draupadi is in one way analogus to the Sudarsana Cakra of Sri Krishna which was cutely employed for the defence of the Pandavas. The Radha Cakra may have some relevance in extending initial defence to Krishna or Draupadi, the Pandava Queen at her maiden entry into the Pandava dynasty, for it successfully eliminated the undiserving royal suiters. Besides, Draupadi happens to be a very forceful and pivotal character in the grand epic. Her epic magnitude needs be highlighted while introducing her to the body of the text. Her super natural birth (i e. Yanjaseni, born of sacrificial fire) and above all, her maiden exposure before the royal assemblage are just in tune with the strange contrivance at the time of her 'Swayamvara'. Sarala probably thought of this and his treatment of the unique 'Radha Cakra' is probably an aesthetic relish to highlight Arjuna, the protagonist in histrionic skill of archery.



VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Chandrasekhar Rath

There is hardly another country in the world where the national life and character, the entire psycho-ethical frame of a people and the roots of a lasting culture are so deeply entrenched in massive poetical works as in India. Barring the Vedas that form the profound core, there is nothing that influences the flow of life in this vast subcontinent for forty centuries, more than the epics of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Complementing each other, they stand like twin giants against the horizon defying the surge of time and leading on identity and a definition to Indian life. Whatever be the attainments, the failures, the vicissitudes, the worthiness or unworthiness to inherit such a legacy, we can never grow out of the deep influences of these complete human treatises. In case we do and the nation forgets its Vyasa and Valmiki, then perhaps, we shall resemble an orphan of ambiguous parentage whose identity is irretrievably lost. It is rather fortunate that the vast rural population of the country is still steeped in the epics or else the westernised city-dwellers would, by now, have been driftting rootless. But the intellectual leadership being invariably urban, its cultural alienation has got to be halted by timely exposure to tradition atleast through these two great epics.

Vyasa and Valmiki are equally, but exclusively great. The poet of the *Ramayana* has a flexible and universal

genius embracing the titanic and divine, the human and gigantic at once or with an inspired ease of transition. But Vyasa is unmixed Olympian, largely and boldly human, oppressive and sublime but never titanic, starkly austere, strong and masculine, profound and intellectual. They are respectively the right and left lobes of the universal Indian brain and though exclusive, they are exhaustive too. All the values relevant to the individual, social and national life, values etkical, religious, spiritual, terrestrial and transcendental are all embedded into these mighty texts. Any sensible study of Indian life and culture must, therefore, build upon these epics.

There are two distinguishable approaches to the *Mahabharata* for the urban intellectuals of our country. One is to dismiss the great epic as a mass of 'old wives' tales without a spark of poetry or imagination. The subscribers to this view are yet a better lot in comparison to those who remain blissfully ignorant of its very existence. Then the other approach is to get into an endless labour on the exitent of interpolations in the text in a bid to hit the hard core of Vyasa. Both these approaches have a tinge of the alien West that viewed everything here from a distance in the name of scientific objectvity. Before this learned audience I never have any pretensions for scholarship. I would, on the other-hand crave its indulgence to bear with me if I take the liberty of a layman.

The main thrust of scholastic research so far has been to identify the original text written by Krishna of the Island, called Vyasa. Opinions keep differing from time to time so much so that out of nearly a lakh of slokas in the present text seventyfive to ninety percent is suspected to be the work of inferior talents. Some go by the lines.

Astausloka sahasrani, Astausloka satanicha.
Aham vedmi sukovetti Sanjayo vetti ba na ba
(Adiparva I, 81)

and limit the original to only eight thousand eight hundred slokas (Prof. Weber). But building a theory on so flimsy an evidence and then trying to establish it somehow or other is typically tutonic. Further the interpretation and understanding of the lines seems to be rather superficial. If at all Vyasa claims to know eight thousand eight hundred slokas should it not mean those slokas which contain knowledge of exclusive realisation embedded in a mass of other narrative slokas ? When the verbs 'vedmi and 'vetti' are used the suggestions is at the knowledge behind the slokas rather than the lines of the slokas. It would perhaps be fruitful research to identify these realisation—based and thought laden slokas numbering eight thousand and eight hundred rather than jumping to the conclusion that Vyasa's total text was limited to this much only.

By another interpretation the same two lines are said to work out to twenty six hundred slokas, and thus seventy five percent of the presently extant text is isolated as innterpolation. This again is a kind of hasy generalisation, in which the attitude is somehow to cut the argument short and be done with it, as if it is somabody else's problem out of which we seek a quick riddance.

The more discerning literary scholars seek internal evidences in the style and direction, a distinct hallmark of Vyasa and suggest that at least two clearly distinguishable voices are heard,if not four. These two are as distinct as Vyasa and Valmiki and cannot belong to the same author. In fact, the second voice has a flow and a kind of imaginative flare which is an imitation of Valmiki, rather than Vyasa. There are still inferior examples of poetry, totally devoid of the

masterly touch. This, they say clearly, proves that there are at least two authors if not four or more that are responsible for the entire text. Style is certainly the man and particularly so in poetry. But man, and that too a great creative genius is never a static point. He is like a mighty oak that grows through different stages ; and each stage has a style of its own. The style of Love's Labour's Lost is certainly not the style of Macbeth A great mind like Vyasa obviously had a gradual growth and has registered such a growth in growing style. The author or Nala or Savitri has the Vyasa in his romantic adolescence, with verbose poetic images and is different from the profound seer of the Bhagvat Gita. Therefore, there is a possibility and perhaps, a desirability, of a great mind displaying its ability in more than one styles. But the question is whether these styles come in any logical sequence in the process of growth or can co-exist at any given point of time. If the inferior artist in the *Mahabharata* can be taken as Vyasa in his adolescent style, could it be possible that he wrote the bulk of the epic in this style and tauched his characterstic heights of grandeur only at times. This does not sound logicial and is not supported by experiences of real life. An author keeps growing and does not look back. There is no return to the past. Even Shakespeare who came round to the dark comedies after his mighty plays did not repeat his old style of the early stage. In fact it was not practicable. So we have, perhaps to admit by the evidences of styles, attitudes and even different deliniations of the same character that there are multiple authors of the Mahabharata as we know it today.

But my submission is that great poetry is the manifestation of an awareness. It is the demand of an age. In the life of an average author also the work of a stage of his awareness proves inadequate and given a chance, he would perhaps revise it and keep revising till the end of his life. But again

taking the time-space and conciousness as a continum, no work can be repeated and once recorded, should be treated as final. The author growing out of a stage has to think of another work of creation rather than the revision of the previous ons. But there are legends and ballads that flow concurrently with life and keep growing and changing in the process. Such a legend keeps accommodating the demands of the changing times. It does not die but regenerates.

The *Mahabharata* is not read but lived. It is not lived by the contemporaries of Vyasa alone but by the thousands of generations thereafter and perhaps by their successors as well. One can say about the epic :

'pasyedam devasya kavyam na jiryati na mriyate ca.'

Behold the epic of the Lord, that neither decays nor dies. It has regenerated continuously and the creative mind of an age has possessed and created it over and over again. Lesser mortals than Vyasa they may be, but they have added details of a few episodes here and there plenty of narratives and descriptions which obviously satisfied the creative egos and swelled the text.

But if the *Mahabharata* is lived so are the Vedas and possibly more intensely. How was it that among the seventeen odd readings of the Vedic texts Maxmuller could not notice a single deviation of a syllable ? How was the text preserved in its purity ? Yes, that is a relevant question. But when was the purity preserved ? It was only after the stabilisation of the text. Obviously the Vedas were not revealed on a single day, or during a single generation. Dirghatamas was certainly not a contemporary of Vamadeva or Goutama. Can any one say which part of the Rig veda was the original text and which others have come (interpolated ?) later ? Well that is atleast irrel evant if not sacrilegeous. The growth

and regeneration was a process for many centuries after which it stablised. The sediments settling ultimately formed a rock and that was preserved without any deviations

So is the *Mahabharata*. After a period of mutation and regeneration the socalled interpolations have stopped and the text is stabilised. In that form of about a lakh of slokas it has been accepted and preserved by generations of Indians for centuries now. Need we, therefore, question the text and keep the growing generations confused ? Why cannot we accept the text as a whole by and large and leave just a handful of specific scholars to satisfy themselves with the separation of the genuine from the fake Vyasa.

So long as the message of the *Mahabharata* is clear, the central theme of Kaurava ascendency and the establishment of Dharmarajya is undisturbed. the chief characters remain unchanged in their inter-relations and functions and the great war is fought and won, why not take the bold and positive and possibly the sensible Indian attitude of rechiving the whole text in our arms and own it as our precious heritage—inter-polation or no interpolation ? We are, in fact, not much concerned with the text of our national epic as with how much modern, how much western and alien we can appear in our indifference and apathy to the great Mahabharata My submission to this learned assembly of scholars is to have no more of the interpolation wrangle, started by the West with an apparent spirit of enquiry but may be with the design to demean and dwarf all the pinnacles and grandeur we have. They taught us to declare our ancestral language dead and obediently we have buried our Sanskrit alive. They have also taught us to dislike, disrespect most of our holy and secular texts as humbug. Let us not fall into the trap and use all our scholarship more positively to grow out of

the counter-productive labour of determining the authorship of the Mahabharata. Instead of particularising the Krishna of the island, why not be satisfied with the more generic name Vyasa the oompiler ? We have much greater and more salutary task of exposing our growing generations to the wealth of wisdom contained in the epic, re-establishing our tradition more firmly on the shifting ground of modern urbanisation. Pray let us change our attitude and us relive the Mahabharata with a pride of possession.



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